THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

A Quarterly for the Independent Thinker

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New Departures and Old Problems — *William A. Neilson*

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM

The Function of the Liberal Arts College in a Democratic Society

John Dewey, Alexander Meiklejohn, Scott Buchanan, Arnold S. Nash, Kenneth C. M. Sills, Ernest Earnest

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— Emerson

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Autumn · 1944 **Vol. 13 · No. 4**

CONTENTS

New Departures and Old Problems . . . . . *William A. Neilson* 389

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM

The Function of the Liberal Arts College in a Democratic Society

The Problem of the Liberal Arts College . . . . . *John Dewey* 391
Required Education for Freedom . . . . . *Alexander Meiklejohn* 393
Liberal Education and Politics . . . . . *Scott Buchanan* . . 396
The Liberal Arts College and Professional Education . . . *Arnold S. Nash* . . 398
The Useful and Liberal Arts and Sciences . . . . . *Kenneth C. M. Sills* . 401
Even A.B.'s Must Eat . . . . . *Ernest Earnest* . . . 403

Force and Freedom . . . . . *Ernst Cassirer* . . 407

Finnegans Wake: An Anthropological Study . . . . . *Richard V. Chase* . 418

To a Medieval Poet, *A Poem* . . . . . *George F. Whicher* . 427

Occupied Country, *A Poem* . . . . . *Don Gordon* . . . 428

Honorable Discharge . . . . . *John A. P. Millet* . 429

The Jews — A Problem That Cannot Wait . . . . . *Robert Gordis* . . . 437

Dauntless the Slug-Horn, *A Poem* . . . . . *Robert A. Hume* . 449

The Beard of Joseph Palmer . . . . . *Stewart Holbrook* . 451

A Word for the American Essay . . . . . *John T. Flanagan* . 459

Man at Work, *A Poem* . . . . . *Oscar Williams* . . 467

Benedictory, *A Poem* . . . . . *Elizabeth Phillips* . 468

Penicillin . . . . . *Jane Stafford* . . . 469

Count Rumford, "The International Egotist" . . . . *Frederic H. Young* . 479

Itself Unmoving, *A Poem* . . . . . *Nancy Kirby* . . . 488

THE REVOLVING BOOKSTAND

"Most Happifying Purposes" . . . . . *Gerald W. Johnson* 490

OUR READERS COMMENT . . 495 INDEX TO VOLUME 13 . . . 511

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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New Departures and Old Problems

When the first editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR left us to join the armed services, the direction of the magazine fell into the hands of the President of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, Dr. Marjorie H. Nicolson. For her services in maintaining the standards that had been set up and for steering the Board through a difficult transition period, we are deeply in her debt and wish to express our gratitude.

This first number under the editorship of Hiram Haydn presents two new features. "The Revolving Bookstand" is an attempt to solve a problem that has often been discussed by the Board, that of the kind of recognition we should attempt to give to new books. It was obvious that a quarterly of moderate size could not aim at a comprehensive survey of current literature. On the other hand, a journal dealing with the main tendencies of contemporary thought could hardly ignore the publication of works giving such thought outstanding expression. A middle course may perhaps be found in a quarterly article discussing a group of books of a somewhat similar character. Mr. Gerald W. Johnson's lively and penetrating account of five contributions to American history gives ground for hope that in "The Revolving Bookstand" the solution of one problem has been found.

The second new feature is the Forum. It is planned to deal in each issue with an important debatable topic. As a rule, two writers will present differing points of view, but in this first instance it was found that the problem of the liberal college had so many aspects that six authors have been invited to contribute.

These six authors present a considerable variety in their attitudes, but one cannot fail to observe a growing emphasis on vocational education. This was, of course, anticipated as a result of the pressure of the war. The most conservative of the group is President Sills, who quotes from the charter of Bowdoin a recognition of "useful" as well as "liberal arts and sciences" among the aims of the college, and hints at the broadening of opportunities for vocational training, but who on the whole relies on the traditional curriculum to provide a liberal education, the end of which is "freedom from ignorance and prejudice."

Mr. Nash and Mr. Earnest are outspoken in their demand that we recognize the duty of the college and the university to train the student to earn a living; but both insist on "vocational *education with a difference*." This difference is that the profession is to be "explicitly related to a comprehensive understanding of man, his place in society and his relation to the universe," says Mr. Nash; while Mr. Earnest insists that "the liberal arts college must educate chemists and sociologists and journalists *with vision*." Essentially the same point is made by Professor Dewey: "The problem of securing to the liberal arts college its due function in democratic society is that of seeing to it that the technical subjects which are now socially necessary acquire *a humane direction*."

Dr. Meiklejohn, on the other hand, explicitly demands two kinds of education, vocational and liberal. The first will, of necessity, be multifarious, because of the variety of vocations; the second is to be the same for all. The basis of this uniform demand is political: government by consent of the governed requires an understanding of issues. So the elective system must go, yet, in some unexplained fashion, individual

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needs are to be cared for. Teaching procedures should not be uniform; the curriculum should not be imposed; yet "all men, everywhere, should study the same lessons." Dr. Meiklejohn is clearly faced by the old dilemma of freedom *versus* discipline, but I cannot find that he provides a solution.

Dean Buchanan takes his text from the same dictum by President Hutchins with which Dr. Meiklejohn concludes his discussion: "Liberal education is the same for everybody everywhere always." But he ends by telling us that we do not yet know what that kind of liberal education may be, yet he urges us to provide it for adults as soon as possible. I confess to some bewilderment, due in part to some difficulty in understanding his language. I supposed that he and his colleagues had found the answer in the curriculum of St. John's College and the great books, and that this was what Professor Dewey had in mind in making his penetrating remark that "books which are cut off from vital relations with the needs and issues of contemporary life themselves become ultra-technical."

Nevertheless, a glimmer of light emerges from this Forum discussion. In Mr. Nash's "vocational education with a difference," in Mr. Earnest's chemists "with vision," in Professor Dewey's technical studies with "a humane direction," we find a common recognition that liberal education is to be found less in a prescribed list of studies than in the spirit in which these studies are taught. But after this view has been accepted there remains the harder question of how to find teachers capable of transmitting this spirit through which is to be achieved President Sills' "freedom from ignorance and prejudice."

William A. Neilson

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The American Scholar Forum

THE FUNCTION OF THE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The Problem of the Liberal Arts College

John Dewey

Nothing is more striking in recent discussions of liberal education than the widespread and seemingly spontaneous use of *liberating* as a synonym for *liberal*. For it marks a break with the traditional idea that a certain group of studies is liberal because of something inhering in them — belonging to them by virtue of an indwelling essence or nature — as opium was once said to put persons to sleep because of its dormitive nature. This latter view of the liberal arts has the merit, for some writers and educators, of rendering it unnecessary to inquire closely into what the subjects actually accomplish for those who study them. If a particular group of studies is "liberal" in and of itself, such an inquiry is irrelevant. Failure to exercise a liberating educative effect in given cases is not the fault of the studies but of external conditions, such, perhaps, as the inherent incapacity of some students to rise to a truly "intellectual" level. To define liberal as that which liberates is to bring the problem of liberal education and of the liberal arts college within the domain of an inquiry in which the issue is settled by search for what is actually accomplished. The test and justification of claims put forth is found in observable consequences, not in an *a priori* dogma.

JOHN DEWEY, dean of American philosophers and educators, is the author of many books, including *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, and *Culture and Freedom*.

The concrete significance of the foregoing generalities in locating the present problem of the liberal arts college is found in outstanding historic considerations. The theory that certain subjects are liberal because of something forever fixed in their own nature was formulated prior to the rise of scientific method. It was consonant with the philosophical theory which was once held about every form of knowledge. For according to that doctrine if anything is knowable it is because of its inherent nature, form or essence, so that knowledge consists of an intuitive grasp by pure "intellect" of this nature. This doctrine is completely repudiated in the practices which constitute the scientific revolution.

In the second place, the traditional doctrine was embodied in educational institutions in a period that was pre-technological as well as pre-scientific. The liberal arts were sharply contrasted with the useful arts. This contrast had its basis in social and cultural conditions. The useful or industrial arts were acquired by means of sheer apprenticeship in fixed routines in which insight into principles played a negligible part. The industrial revolution which marks the last few centuries is the result of the scientific revolution. Only the most backward "useful" arts are now matters of empirical routine. They are now technological, a fact which signifies that they are founded in scientific understanding of underlying principles.

In the third place, and most important of

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all, social organization has also undergone a revolution. The distinction between "liberal" and "useful" arts is a product of the time when those engaged in industrial production were mechanics and artisans who occupied a servile social status. The meaning attached to the traditional doctrine of liberal arts cannot be understood except in connection with the social fact of division between free men and slaves and serfs, and the fact that only the former received an "intellectual" education, which under the given conditions necessarily meant literary and linguistic training. At the time in which a scientific revolution was radically changing the nature and method of knowledge, understanding and learning, and in which the industrial revolution was breaking down once for all the wall between the hand and the head, the political revolution of the rise of democracy was giving a socially free status to those who had been serfs. It thereby destroyed the very foundation of the traditional separation between the arts suitable for a "gentleman" and the arts suited to those engaged in production of useful services and commodities: that is to say, the separation between "liberal" and "useful" arts.

It is not possible to grasp and state the present dilemma of the liberal arts college, and of the function it should undertake in our society, except as they are placed and seen in this context of irreversible historic movements. Nothing can be sillier than attributing the problems of the contemporary liberal college in this country to the activities of a number of misguided educationalists, instead of to the impact of social forces which have continually gained in force. If there is anything equally silly, it is the assertion (by those who would resolve these problems by a return to an outworn identification of "liberal" with the linguistic, the literary and metaphysical) that their opponents are complacently satisfied with the present situation. For, in fact, the latter anticipated the former by many years in pointing out the confusions, conflicts, and uncertainties that mark present collegiate education.

When the situation is viewed in historic perspective (a kind of view quite foreign to the victims and adherents of an exclusively literary and metaphysical training) it is seen that scientific studies made their way into the college against the resistance of entrenched orthodoxy because of their growing importance in the conduct of social affairs, not because of intrinsic love of scientific knowledge — much less because of widespread devotion to scientific method. When Latin lost its monopoly as the universal language of communication among the learned, living languages were added to the curriculum. Not only were the degrees of S.B. and Ph.B. added to the old A.B. (or else the latter extended to cover the new studies), but the curriculum became congested and its aim wavering and unsure.

The new modes of social pressure did not stop at this point. A large number of new callings and occupations came into existence. They competed vigorously with the three traditional "learned" professions, and the effect of this competition found its way into the colleges. At the same time, two of the learned professions, medicine and law, were undergoing great changes. New discoveries in chemistry and physiology so changed medicine as to render it virtually impossible to crowd preparation into the time previously allotted. Studies which in effect, if not in name, were pre-medical found their way into the college. The great changes that were going on in industry and commerce together with their social effects affected the practice of law. The consequences for college education were less overt than in the case of medicine, but they are genuinely present.

The net result of the alterations produced by the social changes here briefly noted has been to render the name "liberal arts college" reminiscent rather than descriptive when it is applied to many of our collegiate institutions. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that representatives of the older literary and metaphysical point of view who have been on the defensive have now taken the offensive. Consistently with their view that certain subjects are inherently liberal, they are proclaiming that other subjects, notably those that are scientific and technological, are inherently illiberal, materialistic, and utilitarianly servile, unless they are kept in strict subjection. Social revolutions rarely if ever go completely backward in spite of reactions that occur. I do not believe that there is great likelihood that the American undergraduate college will, in any large number of cases, return to the literary and metaphysical course of study of the traditional liberal arts institutions. I seem to notice that those who are verbally active in this direction are not discouraging receipt of funds to add still

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more new scientific and semi-vocational courses to an already swollen curriculum.

The danger, to my mind, lies elsewhere. It is possible to freeze existing illiberal tendencies and to intensify existing undesirable splits and divisions. At a time when technical education is encroaching in many cases upon intelligent acquaintance with and use of the great humanistic products of the past, we find that reading and study of "classics" are being isolated and placed in sharp opposition to everything else. *The problem of securing to the liberal arts college its due function in democratic society is that of seeing to it that the technical subjects which are now socially necessary acquire a humane direction.* There is nothing in them which is "inherently" exclusive; but they cannot be liberating if they are cut off from their humane sources and inspiration. On the other hand, books which are cut off from vital relations with the needs and issues of contemporary life themselves become ultra-technical.

The outstanding need is interfusion of knowledge, of man and nature, of vocational preparation with a deep sense of the social foundations and social consequences of industry and industrial callings in contemporary society. On the face of this need we have urged upon us a policy of their systematic separation. I lately received from a man distinguished in public life, not a professional educator, a letter in which he writes: "Millions of our soldiers are coming back reactionaries of a kind through their lack of cultural education to appraise their surroundings and the events that are taking place." I would add that there are at home many other millions who are confused and bewildered, at the mercy of drift and of designing "leaders," because of their lack of an education that enables them to appraise their surroundings and the course of events. The present function of the liberal arts college, in my belief, is to use the resources put at our disposal alike by humane literature, by science, by subjects that have a vocational bearing, so as to secure ability to appraise the needs and issues of the world in which we live. Such an education would be liberating not in spite of the fact that it departs widely from the seven liberal arts of the medieval period, but just because it would do for the contemporary world what those arts tried to do for the world in which they took form.

Required Education for Freedom

Alexander Meiklejohn

I

In a modern democratic society every citizen has two different parts to play. He must, therefore, have two different educations. Unless we can distinguish and relate these two sets of teachings, we cannot understand the function of the college of liberal arts.

In the first place, every one of us, woman or man, has, or should have, a special, useful, job to do. He must, therefore, have special, vocational training for that job. And since the jobs of men are multifarious, it follows that their vocational trainings are equally multifarious.

But there is another kind of education which does not vary from man to man. It is the same for all the members of a society, and all alike must have it. They must all study the same lessons. They must learn to shoulder the same responsibilities, to grapple with the same problems, to share in the making of common decisions. They must be fused together by a common passion for a common truth and a common welfare. The learning of these lessons is not, in a democracy, an elective. It is a requirement. And the meeting of that universal requirement is the function of a college of liberal arts in a democracy. In an aristocratic society, on the contrary, liberal education, at the college level, is provided only for a few, only for the "leaders." "Followers," it is assumed, do

Formerly president of Amherst College, chairman of the Experimental College of the University of Wisconsin, and chairman of the School for Social Studies, San Francisco, ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN is now president of the American Association for Adult Education.

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not need to understand what is going on. But, in a democracy, the college of liberal arts is the college of the common man, of all men. It teaches both leaders and followers. And it gives them both the same liberal education.

No better basis for the understanding of liberal education has ever been offered than the statement that governments derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed." The writer of that phrase knew that, in a free society, all men must be governed. They must all obey the laws. But he knew also that, in a free society, laws are enacted only by common consent. They are not imposed by a foreign power. They are not thrust upon the general group by the force or guile of private individuals or factions. No man, in a democracy, is called upon to obey a law unless he has had full opportunity to share in the making of that law. The governing is done by consent of the governed. The governed, as a group, govern themselves.

Now it is clear that, in this democratic plan of social action, the crucial term is "consent." And it is that term, likewise, which defines the function of the liberal arts college. It is chiefly the failure to recognize the decisive, authoritative meaning of that term which has rendered the theory and practice of liberal education in the United States so confused, so vacillating and so futile. What, then, is the "consent" which, in the forming of decisions on matters of common policy, makes men free and equal?

The first step in planning for government by consent is to give to every woman and man a vote, and to provide that their votes shall be equally counted. But another step is needed to make the first effective. No one can, in a working sense of the term, give or refuse consent to a policy unless he understands what the policy is. He must know the situation with which it deals, must see the alternatives among which selection is to be made. Consent requires intelligence. To vote for a candidate whom you do not know, or for a measure which you do not understand, is not the act of a free man. It is the mechanical performance of a robot, pushed hither and yon by external forces. Robots do not give or refuse consent. They respond to manipulation.

The principle which I am trying to suggest was magnificently stated two thousand years ago by Epictetus, a Greek slave in Rome. Slashing through the aristocratic pretenses of the Roman world, he declared, "The rulers of the state have said that only free men shall be educated; but God has said that only educated men shall be free." If the United States intends to be a democracy, then from Maine to California, from Minnesota to Mississippi the truth of that dictum must find vigorous recognition in educational action. Democratic machinery may give men votes. But the spirit of democracy is alive only in so far as men and women can know and understand what is being voted about. We approach democracy only in so far as we approach universal collegiate liberal education.

At this point, however, it is necessary to recognize that the field of general welfare is wider than the field of technical political action. The common will, the common intelligence, of a society reaches decisions in forms other than that of voting. By means of the newspaper, the magazine, the book, the pulpit, the platform, by conversation and discussion, by radio and moving picture, social programs of behavior are constantly presented to us for acceptance or rejection. But, here again, democracy can prevail only in so far as consent — the free, intelligent consent of all the people — takes active control over the situation. There are robots in religion and art, in business and manners, as well as in politics. And robots cannot be the members of a free society. It is the abolition of robotry which, on the negative side, defines the function of the liberal college.

II

It is clearly impossible, in this brief paper, to discuss fully the social theory which underlies liberal education. Our American colleges, I am sure, have been deeply corrupted by a false Individualism which has made private interest prior to public interest. Laissez-faire in the intellectual life has been even more disastrous than in the economic life. It is bad enough to say that in a free society, a man may "do" what he pleases. But to say that he may "think" what he pleases — that is, both for the individual and for the society, the death of freedom. When intellectual caprice thus replaces responsibility, democracy has disintegrated into anarchy.

With respect to the basic dilemma which now faces the college of liberal arts, I can add here only a few remarks which may bring some points of theory into clearer focus.

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First, the "elective" system of studies, in its extreme form, expresses intellectual anarchy. It destroys, in a college, the sense of common purpose, of shared responsibility. And the mitigations of the chaos which have been attempted by "sequences" and "majors" and "groups" do not touch the basic difficulty. On the whole, our faculties assume no responsibility for the liberal education of their pupils. Each teacher teaches his own "subject." And the pupils, if they find understanding of those subjects, find it, in the main, outside the classrooms.

Second, when we say that a liberal course of study must be, in a democracy, "required," we are not saying that the peculiar needs, tastes, capacities, and incapacities of the individual student should be ignored. On the contrary, it is imperative that those factors be carefully observed and dealt with as we try to make the student an active and successful participant in the common enterprise. But to say that is not to say that there is no common enterprise.

Third, the statement that liberal education must be essentially the same for all free men and women does not imply a deadly uniformity of teaching procedure. Nor does it mean that there is to be imposed upon any college a curriculum "required" by some external authority. Neither deadly uniformity nor external compulsion are useful in the teaching of freedom. The First Amendment to the Constitution, which proclaims the necessary freedom of the human mind, is eternally valid for the teaching process. And yet, so paradoxical is the nature of freedom that unless our citizens can understand and feel the necessity which that Amendment expresses, it becomes a dead and meaningless piece of political machinery. To say that men are free to think whatever seems to them valid about democracy does not mean that they are free not to think about it. Eternal vigilance of the mind is the price of liberty. And that vigilance is not, for the liberal college, an elective. It is a democratic requirement.

Fourth, when we say that liberal and vocational educations are not identical, we are not saying that liberal learning lives in an ivory tower, that it despises and ignores the vocations of men. On the contrary, no one can understand contemporary society unless he has grasped that total scheme of scientific ideas and technological inventions which, by its complicated division of human labor, has transformed and is transforming all our social relations. To know how the work of the world is done is a necessary step in the liberal attempt to know what it is done for, to distinguish what is worth doing from what is not worth doing.

Fifth, it is often suggested that the liberal learning of each individual should find its origin, its driving motive, in the vocation of that individual. The intent of the suggestion is, I think, valid. It seeks to insure that learning and living shall be closely integrated. But, as a teaching procedure, it seems to me, in general, doomed to failure. Even though it is beset by all the evils of election and specialization, it might be made to work for a fortunate few. For those of us whose daily occupation is so significant that we would choose to go on with it even if our pay were withdrawn, that occupation might, perhaps, serve as the focus of our general understanding. But the great majority of our citizens are not so fortunate. For them an occupation is not a thing of primary interest. Their "living" is done in other fields. And it is in those fields, rather than in an occupation, that learning and living must find their needed integration.

Sixth, the college of liberal arts is rightly a "bookish" institution. It does not give all the elements of a liberal education but only those which are available in a classroom. Its tools are words and symbols. For the most part it deals with ideas and abstractions. In a concrete-minded America there is little danger that those ideas and abstractions will be taken too seriously.

Seventh, it is hardly necessary to say that the college does not complete the teaching which a free society needs. The very existence of government by consent depends upon our success in creating and maintaining a national system of adult liberal education. Under modern conditions men cannot be free unless they study freedom, unless the study of freedom is "required."

Finally, though this argument has dealt directly only with the teaching of the colleges of the United States, its real import has to do with collegiate teaching in all the nations. Humanity, as a whole, must now be joined together by those bonds of mutual understanding and generosity which constitute a democratic society. And that means that all men and women throughout the world must be free and equal. They must all, therefore, study the same lessons.

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Liberal Education and Politics

Scott Buchanan

Liberal education is the same for everybody everywhere always. This is the statement in Mr. Hutchins' *Higher Learning in America* that rang the bell that roused the sleeping dogs in the kennels of American education before Pearl Harbor. Sniffing around for contextual meanings, motives, intentions, and consequences, these watch dogs of progressive education barked out the warning that it was a sneak attack from the Fascists, the Papists, and other people with frayed nerves. I am not sure I agree with all that Mr. Hutchins has said about education, and I am certain that I don't know all his motives, ulterior intentions, and the possible consequences of his administration, but I do think this statement of his worthy of clarification and criticism. It is a very general proposition and it therefore needs both abstract and specific explication. I propose here to attempt the abstraction and to make one specific application, politics. This will not reduce it to an adequate clarity and distinctness, but may serve to articulate a section of the current controversy.

Abstract thought is a rare factor in American education and the consequence is that in both theory and practice our education has always and everywhere been emergency education. Its virtue has been a sensitivity and responsiveness to symptoms of change; its vice has been forgetting its aim.

The actual education of the Founding Fathers was a colonial importation from eighteenth-century Europe: deism in religion, rationalism in ethics, politics, economics, and natural philosophy, and a skepticism with regard to all forms of authority. The justification of slavery and the right of revolution were frequent subjects of the public disputations from which our college commencement exercises are derived. One can see that a great deal of traditional liberal education is taken for granted as the basis of this kind of higher learning. Languages and mathematics, history and mechanics were in every gentleman's equipment as he went on to choose theology, law, medicine, or commerce as his career. The European pattern was sophisticated and intellectual; the American acceptance of it was uncritically utilitarian. Education was the transmission of useful knowledge to the few upon whose wisdom the future of the young country depended. The war for independence made the educational emergency acute and the new republic rapidly set up colleges of traditionally useful knowledge for the training of its indispensable leaders.

The next crisis was the recognition that a republic needed universal literacy in its electorate, and Thomas Jefferson in Virginia showed how to meet the emergency by building useful higher learning on the broad base of reading, writing, and arithmetic for everybody: grammar schools for everybody and colleges of liberal arts and universities for the few selected geniuses. It is important to note that the alphabet of the liberal arts for everybody is the greatest single contribution we have made in education, but it was made to meet the emergency of revolutionary state-building. It was far more revolutionary than Thomas Jefferson imagined.

The industrial revolution, its technology and natural science, brought on the second American revolution and a generation later dictated the elective system to colleges and schools. Utility and speed multiplied subject-matters, divided schools, departments, and courses, and forced early specialization to insure manpower and leadership for the industrial society. As technology and science invaded and reformed society, so the elective system re-defined useful knowledge and reformed our educational system to meet a continuing series of emergencies.

The recognition of this crisis was late but complete in John Dewey. He saw that American life was made up of emergencies or trouble-situations in both industry and society and that useful knowledge must be self-generated and put to work in such contexts. The school and college should select, invent, and present a series of emergent situations to prepare each individual for his precarious life. Explicit interests are symptoms of trouble in the student himself; let the student select and improvise trouble for himself. Progressive education will then be

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thoroughly democratic and we shall not have to worry about politics at all.

This is the story of the acceptance, the acceleration, and finally the generalization of emergency as the principle of educational dynamics in a young society. In outline it is not a new story, nor need we be ashamed of it. On the other hand, we ought to recognize in it an almost complete forgetting of the liberal arts which we as uncritical utilitarians imported from Europe. In fact, recent discussions of the liberal arts college are full of the fact and the accusation of hypocrisy whenever the liberal arts are mentioned; "education for freedom," a weak attempt at translation, has been understood by the public as a mere political slogan, covering all manner of dark ambiguity. We are afraid of what we have forgotten.

This is not saying that by taking sudden thought we can know what the liberal arts ought now to be or what they might have now become if we had not forgotten. It is possible, however, to reminisce and to detect what was forgotten or unguessed at the crucial points of the story. For instance, it seems clear that the Founding Fathers purposely ignored or forgot that the educational institutions that they transplanted were not primarily, or by intention, tools of politics. They had been founded, guided, and maintained by an institution that conceived itself above the national state, in fact a universal institution, the Catholic Church. It is true that it had once identified itself with a political entity, the Roman Empire, but it had maintained its identity and independence when the imperium had crumbled. It also gave birth to universities and schools which were integral parts of a universal republic of learning, whose only authority was the truth as interpreted by reason. The individual citizen of this secular republic, as pupil, teacher, or official, as well as the universities and schools, enjoyed the same liberties and immunities from the political state that the church enjoyed. Freedom of thought and freedom of religion have this common history, and it was early recognized that the student, the scholar, and teacher were important to the good life in the state primarily because they were not merely its servants.

Those citizens of the republic of learning would have recognized the deep identity of truth and useful knowledge, but they would not have substituted one for the other in their discourse about learning and teaching. They would not have dropped the liberal arts from education because society was becoming democratic or tyrannical. They would not have asked the question implied in the title to this series of papers in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. They would have assented to the proposition that liberal education is in essence and purpose the same everywhere and always, and would have insisted that all human dealing with trouble-situations is improved by the application of the liberal arts, since they are the arts of free reason and intelligence.

For various reasons the European citizen of the republic of learning would not have said that liberal education is for everybody. That is the great revolutionary American contribution to our knowledge of what the liberal arts are, although many Americans do not yet know it. Thomas Jefferson's political exploitation of the three R's for the masses has left us to work out its consequences, consequences which he did not see because the crisis of the industrial revolution had not posed the educational trouble-situation before which John Dewey has retreated. Thomas Jefferson proposed that letters and numbers be made the common possession of all men, apparently not seeing that these were the seeds of a universal republic of learning, a republic that would outgrow and burst through the political utilities that he set up, although he recognized this in principle in his list of civil liberties.

The fact is, as Plato and Montesquieu knew, that the education of the citizens is the operating principle of any republic, and the highest common good, dominating and tempering the other common goods, justice, peace, order, and freedom, is learning. Even the laws of the republic are mediums of instruction. The Founding Fathers, quite forgivably, confused the American republic with the republic of learning, and now the order that emerges from their fateful confusion is that the American republic must lead the rest of the world, and itself as well, to the great task of the complete liberal education of each citizen from the cradle to the grave. I suspect that the first step will be a national effort in adult education, and that suspicion suggests the political and educational dynamite that the situation contains.

There is serious doubt that the present, or pre-war, national state can long continue to discharge its minimal political responsibilities. The continuous and universal liberal education of its citizens would sink or explode

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the ship of state. It appears that the real politics have outgrown nationalism, and a world federated republic is necessary even to preserve our liberties and regulate commerce. We cannot trust the petty government of a nation to establish and control education, because it is timid and weak in its faith in itself — and rightly so. Possibly the universal republic of learning awaits the United States of the World. Liberal education always has been world education and the world government must seek high ends, at least as high as the liberal arts, to save it from the present political fears and indecisions that fever rather than free man's energies.

If men are to be free by this means, then there must be education for freedom for everybody. It must not be merely for this or that crisis in human affairs, for this class or that party, for this or that age or temperament. We must discover the kind of liberal education that can be for everybody. We do not yet know what that may be — no one sought it for everybody on previous occasions when it was provided for the few. We must seek it, since it is among the necessary conditions for all men to be free. The demand is high even in the words Thomas Jefferson quoted: Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The liberal college has been receiver of the bankrupt liberal arts for a century now. Its function is clear: to initiate students as soon as they are ready into the liberal arts as we know them now; and to recover and rebuild them into the world as we come to know and understand it. It would help if each school, college, and university would immediately take on as much responsibility for adult education as it could discharge.

The Liberal Arts College and Professional Education

Arnold S. Nash

The present war is one stage, thus far the most ghastly, in the revolution that is shaking our liberal-capitalist-scientific civilization to its foundations. Being one stage in a process and not something essentially different from the veiled armistice that preceded it, the war throws into clearer relief those disturbing issues which, in more peaceful days, society could placidly ignore. Thus in the field of higher education the absence of an adequate understanding of the place of liberal arts was rudely brought to the fore by the paralysis of universities and colleges before the demands of the Army and Navy. President Algo D. Henderson has suggested that liberal education is among the expendables of war; but Washington has not paid liberal education such a compliment. The Army or Navy, like the small boy with his dime, only regards a motor torpedo boat as expendable because it can be used. Luxuries, like nylon stockings or liberal education, are not expendable; so they are simply not available. Hence the recent flood of books and essays all seeking to defend the abiding worth of liberal education.

These attempts at justification have one feature in common. They unite in regarding liberal education and vocational education at the college level as separated by an abyss: somehow liberal education is real education whilst professional education is not. It is not that these protagonists regard vocational education and liberal education as unrelated to each other. On the contrary, they maintain that the study of the liberal arts provides the appropriate foundation for work in the professional schools of law, education, theology and the like, so long as the two, liberal education and professional education, are not confused. The defense of this bifurcation

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of higher education is that professional education provides the future doctor, engineer or lawyer with the means of livelihood, whereas a liberal education teaches a student to reason and to think clearly.

The thesis of this article is that these apologia fail to convince precisely because they never recognize the basic fact that courses in liberal arts (apart from those so elementary that they should have been taken at the high school stage) constitute, in a disguised form, vocational education of a pronounced and undeniable type. In this brief article it is not possible to give as adequate a documentation as one would wish for such a debatable contention. That it is true at the postgraduate level for those studying languages, classics, history and the like is, however, plain for all to see. Our graduate schools have become, for good or ill, professional schools for the training of future teachers of the liberal arts in colleges and universities.

However, the defender of the liberal arts tradition may reply that even if this argument is valid for liberal arts at the graduate level, it is not true of undergraduate courses. The challenge is accepted. Let us take that most select liberal arts course in the most select university in the world, to wit *Litterae Humaniores* at Oxford. No less an authority than Dr. Frank Aydelotte has pointed out that "if the value of an intellectual discipline may be judged by the eminence of the careers of the men trained in it, there is good ground for the assertion that Greats has for a century stood first in the university world. Its pre-eminent value is commonly attributed to the Greek and Latin classics as training for the mind and to the severity of the standard which has prevailed in this school."

What was the secret of this astonishing success? It was that although this course of study was not deliberately planned to produce the political, administrative and ecclesiastical rulers of the rapidly expanding commercial empire that the United Kingdom built up over the nineteenth century, yet that was what occurred. In short, a liberal arts course based on the synoptic study of classical culture provided the vocational training of future leaders in Church and State. This could happen because, as Adolf Lowe has pointed out, in both ancient Greece and Victorian England the driving force in society was a belief in the rational and moral autonomy of individuals, whilst the order of each society was derived from the *Weltanschauung* and conduct of a privileged minority as approved by a popular majority.

The above analysis, valid for the Oxford "Greats" course, is true for all education based on the liberal arts. Moreover, liberal education can never rise higher than its source and that has always been a class-stratified and a pre-scientific society. The contours of the present crisis in democratic society have been determined by the impact of the technical developments of modern science on our capitalist economy. Only in so far as the social implications of technical discoveries are understood can that crisis be comprehended. It is useless therefore to seek to justify liberal education in its traditional sense, unrelated to vocational training, as adequate for the demands of the modern democratic and scientific world. It is no answer to suggest that liberal arts should include a training in the fundamental sciences of physics, chemistry and biology. To introduce the study of one or more of the experimental sciences into a liberal arts course is not to bring it up to date, but rather to introduce the camel's nose into the tent — a procedure that will sooner or later bring the whole tent down. As the phrase liberal arts indicates, it refers to activities proper to the free man of classical civilization as distinct from the mechanical arts which constitute those suitable for the slave. To use Aristotle's all-revealing words:

> Only such knowledge as does not make the learner mechanical (vulgar) should form a part of education. By mechanical pursuits we should understand all arts and studies that make the body, soul or intellect of free men unserviceable for the use and exercise of virtue.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, in spite of their undoubted mathematical and logical genius, the Greeks were unable, with the millstone of such a philosophy of manual labor tied round their necks, to develop experimental science in the sense in which we have known it since the days of Galileo. Clear thinking, however logical and learned, is not science.

Let me sum up my thesis thus far. I am pleading for a rejection of that theory of education which regards liberal arts as *real* education, and dismisses explicit training for the professions as merely *vocational* education. Instead I am arguing that higher education should be based on an explicit acceptance of what is implicitly true, viz., that our students by the time they reach

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education of university level (for most colleges at the end of the sophomore year) are already engaged in training for their future profession.

The usual reply to such a plea is that the narrowing influence of professional courses renders them even less capable than the liberal arts of providing an adequate basis for post-secondary education. That statement is lamentably true, but to accept it as true does not mean that higher education should not be vocational education. It means that it should be vocational education *with a difference*. That difference can be seen if we notice that those who defend the bifurcation between vocational and liberal education took over from the medieval university what they should have left behind — liberal arts — and left behind what they should have brought with them — the conviction that the task of a university is to train for a profession when that profession is explicitly related to a comprehensive understanding of man, his place in society and his relation to the universe.

Hence I am not defending the notion that a university should be a collection of professional schools, where, to use President Hutchins' apt phrase, the tricks of the trade are taught. Nor am I blind to the values of the Renaissance tradition which the liberal arts seek to conserve. Here I can only affirm that we must never let go (however much we may qualify) the life-affirming spirit of classical humanism and all that it has meant for Western civilization. The present system of higher education, whereby a university is made up of a college for the study of liberal arts, and professional schools for the training of doctors, scientists, engineers and lawyers, stands in the way of the widespread inculcation of the insights for which the humanities stand. For this reason the study of the humanities should be carried on not as an addendum to but within the context of and giving meaning to a student's professional studies.

Although this task will be far from easy the main outlines of what is involved are already clear. Each student needs to see his future profession as it has evolved in man's long struggle with himself, with nature, and with society. In short, each student must achieve an adequate sense of historical understanding. Moreover, he should also be enabled to see his future profession within the matrix of contemporary society; that is, he must appropriate to himself the insights born of a truly sociological outlook. The great danger is that we shall try to achieve the first of these aims by thinking that the necessary sense of historical understanding, for example, can be stimulated in a student of chemistry if he is taught the history of chemistry by a chemist, who will invariably do so out of relation to the rest of the historical pattern. The alternative danger is that he will be the victim of an elementary course in political or economic or social history taught by "some one from the history department," whose knowledge of chemistry will be limited to the formula for water. It is difficult to decide which of these alternatives will be the more irrelevant for the student seeking to reach the desired goal.

Similarly the student of chemistry will not necessarily achieve any awareness of a sociological outlook by listening to lectures on chemistry and industry from the professor of applied chemistry, and it will be a miracle of grace if he takes even the first step towards it as a result of the efforts of the typical professor of sociology.

However, if the thorny problem is comprehended at a level sufficiently profound by recognizing that in education all simple solutions are bogus solutions, there is no insurmountable reason why our universities and colleges cannot after a life-generation be transformed from what they are now, schools of preparation for *livelihood*, and become instead schools of preparation for *life*.

The above view of the matter precipitates a question that the typical university or college teacher vainly attempts to ignore: for what kind of life must I educate? Kierkegaard's contention — that on the ultimate problems of life and destiny neutrality is impossible — is inescapable. To take up even a *neutral* position is to take up *some* position. Yet what usually happens is that the teacher who is a scholar has become so absorbed in the technicalities of his own specialism that he ignores the problem altogether whilst the teacher who has given up any ambition he ever had of expanding the bounds of human knowledge never sees the problem at all. The result is the same in each case. They both teach unconsciously and therefore uncritically some version of the modern man's creed that human nature, if not perfect, is, like the world as a whole, slowly getting better and that perfection will be reached sooner or later provided that we all put our trust in education, intelligence and scientific method.

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In the light of the above analysis of the state of higher education in the contemporary scene, certain conclusions become evident. Those liberal arts colleges which are doing work of genuine university standing (and there are many) should frankly ask themselves the question, "For what professions are we now preparing our students and for what professions could we prepare our students?" When they have answered those questions the next step is clear. Let them become universities. The colleges which are not doing work of university standing (and they too are many) should explicitly accept their function as simply to engage in that peculiar continuation of high school education which the junior college exhibits.

In this way, two significant steps would be taken toward a desirable goal for American universities, a goal urged by the vast majority of those educationists who, like Abraham Flexner, have seen at close quarters the universities of Europe and the British Isles: university education would begin with what is now the junior year. Those students who cannot even under present conditions make the grade of the university (and so fade away at the end of the sophomore year) would never get to the university at all. Such a happy state of affairs would be equally beneficial to them, to the better students who stay on, and to the unfortunate teacher who now has to teach both those who should be and those who should not be receiving a university education. Thereby the universities could become universities in fact as well as in name, since they would then be able to bring to an end a process whereby they turn out technicians from their professional schools. Instead, they could graduate men and women who could not only validly claim membership of the learned professions of medicine, law, engineering, science, education, church and synagogue, but who could see their profession in all its human and social relations *sub specie aeternitatis*.

The Useful and Liberal Arts and Sciences

Kenneth C. M. Sills

The charter creating Bowdoin College granted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts June 24, 1794, provides that the college shall use "the endowment . . . in such manner as shall most effectually promote Virtue and Piety and the knowledge of such of the languages and of the useful and liberal arts and sciences as shall hereafter be directed, from time to time, by the Corporation." The phrase "Virtue and Piety" is of course well known to readers of eighteenth-century literature on education. The "languages" are clearly Latin and Greek. But the next phrase, "the useful and liberal arts and sciences," deserves some special attention. I have not been able to discover whether the association of the words "useful and liberal" was common at that time, whether it occurs in other college charters, or whether it was in the Bowdoin document a unique definition of the function of the college. In any event it is today assuredly pertinent; for it seems to indicate a combination of the vocational and the general, of the practical and the ideal purposes of a college education.

Many of the functions of the liberal arts college will not vary as we look forward to the curriculum in the postwar world. A liberal education has always dealt, deals now, and will deal in the future with the freedom of the mind. It is concerned largely with getting rid of the two great enemies of the freedom of the mind, ignorance and prejudice. In a democratic society we hear a great deal of all sorts of freedom, and the Four Freedoms are particularly stressed; but there is no question that we need to emphasize again and again the freedom of the mind. Nor is there any question that in revising the curriculum and in planning for the future there must be a place for that particular kind of training which is designed to make the mind an agile and effective instrument both for the expression of thought and as a reser-

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voir of intellectual interests. The experience of the race seems to demonstrate that certain subjects are more suitable in training the mind to be free than are others. Mathematics, English, the languages, history, the fine arts, both in school and in college, still form the core of a sound education.

In this connection there are some practical considerations to keep in mind. In too much of our planning and in too many of our discussions, too little consideration has been given to the school. It is obvious that the college of the future cannot play its role properly in a democratic society unless the foundations for a liberal education are firmly laid in the school. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that in the ordinary school, particularly in the average high school, far too many subjects are taught, and that there is far too much smattering. Incidentally, there is too much teaching and too little studying. There seems to have been a tendency in the past decade or two in the school to shift the emphasis from subjects that require accuracy and discipline of the mind to studies that are concerned largely with speculation and opinion. Here we seem to put the cart before the horse: we allow boys and girls of immature minds to take subjects that require much more intellectual ability than youth is able to show; we discourage details and encourage generalities. We need in our schools to return to more thoroughness if we expect the college of liberal arts to play its role in a democratic society — so that its graduates may be not only well-educated but efficient citizens.

Granted that our schools, public and private, cooperate with the colleges in providing that kind of thorough instruction which is essential for a well-planned college course, are we to see many changes in the work of the liberal arts college itself? Personally, I believe not. There will be evolution, of course, but no revolution. After World War I we heard on many sides that liberal education was doomed; that the American people would require a more scientific and more definite training from our colleges; that the day of the independently supported college of liberal arts was about over. Today we all know that such prophecies had no basis. Undoubtedly in the next decade there will be shifts of emphasis, changes of technique. No doubt, too, that in preparing students for the democratic society of the future attention will not be limited to the culture of the Western World alone; certainly our horizon will be broadened. The mere mention of the words "China, India, the Far East, Russia" indicates how provincial much of our education has been. But human nature does not change; there will be no discovery that will hasten the maturity of the youthful mind. Too often in discussions of this nature the student, the undergraduate, is the forgotten man. And in the years usually allotted to the formal education of youth there will not be time for the thorough study of the many different subjects in the arts and sciences that abound in interest. We have always got to deal with limits. In education omission is much more important than is popularly supposed; that is why in planning the future of liberal education we shall still have to deal with fundamental subjects: mathematics, the languages, the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the fine arts.

But what of the useful arts and sciences? Perhaps there is here an opportunity to broaden our conception of the functions of a liberal education and to include vocational aspects. Again it is a question, not of *either or* but of *both and*. In other words, a college education should not deal *either* with "how to live" *or* "how to make a living," but with *both* "how to live" *and* "how to make a living." Those who believe wholeheartedly in the validity of a liberal education may be right in their claims that from such an education proceed forces and qualities that aid greatly in making a living. Such advocates assert that whenever society is fluid, as it usually is, a man or woman who has intellectual curiosity and intellectual resourcefulness must be better prepared for the future than one narrowly or specially trained. Nevertheless, a person who has had little or no acquaintance in school or college with the useful arts and sciences is liable to be severely handicapped in the race of life. Somehow or other there must be developed a combination of these two functions, a *via media*, so that a liberally educated person shall combine the attitudes, attributes, and characteristics both of culture and of practice. This is surely one of the goals which the college of liberal arts should set for itself in the future; it is in line with the general philosophy of education that may be termed American, but which has also far wider application.

No one can justly lay all the ills of the world at the present time to the charge of a wrong or poor education, yet every day we are learning, often in the hard way, how much education has to do with national

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attitudes. Italy and the Fascists, Germany and the Nazis, Japan and the Militarists, afford ample evidence of this truth. If in the past quarter of a century the democracies of the world had been half as eager to teach good democratic doctrine, we should all be much farther on the road to victory and ultimate peace. In the democratic society of the future nearly everyone agrees that there must be no regimentation. We shall need as greatly as in the past all sorts and kinds of schools, colleges, technical institutions, and universities. The college of liberal arts has no business to claim supremacy or even superiority; but in American life at least it has an important function. It must so organize the social side of the educational process as to give free play to the varied elements that make up our democracy. Unless it rids itself of racial, religious, and class discrimination it will have no valid place in the democracy of the future. It must open its doors to those who are intellectually and spiritually fit to enter; and it must provide ways and means so that no promising student shall for financial reasons be denied opportunity. It must stress the fact that one of our great heritages is the thought of man's unconquerable mind. It must also — in its curriculum, in its operations, and in its policy — so combine the ideal and the practical, the general and the vocational, the useful and the liberal, that it will make a very real contribution to that democracy for which at the present time so many college men are fighting and for which so many men and women are dreaming and planning. "It is not to be thought that this most famous stream should perish."

Even A.B's Must Eat

Ernest Earnest

There is considerable current alarm about the future of the Liberal Arts College. Naturally this emotion is felt most keenly by persons whose livelihood depends upon the continued existence of that type of institution. They usually defend their bread and butter by eloquent pleas for the nonmaterial values. Thus the many articles in academic journals are likely to be labeled "A Defense of Humanism," or "The Humanities and the Opportunity of Peace." And the discussions are filled with phrases like: "stimulating . . . a critical and aesthetic taste"; "an appreciative love for what is truly and enduringly beautiful"; "teach hope, love, and courage"; "recognize or retrieve those eternal truths which are above the stream of evolution and change"; ". . . true education is but a continuous process of re-examining, re-appraising, and re-vitalizing the interrelationships of existence." And of course there is always the old stand-by: education for democracy.

Now I have no quarrel with any or all of these objectives except, perhaps, with their vagueness. There is always the suspicion that when a use cannot be found for something, it will be asserted to have "higher values" — like an impractical coffee urn kept in the china closet as an *objet d'art*. Our Victorian ancestors were more prone to that sort of thing than we are — though the whatnot has come back in decorator-designed interiors. The magazines are beginning to speak of "the revival of the style of a more leisurely and comfortable age." There is a suspicious parallel between the advertising of Victorian reproductions of furniture and the arguments of the humanists. Please don't ask for a definition of humanist or humanity; there seems to be no agreement on that point. A working definition might be *humanist:* a person who teaches some subject other than science or a vocation; and *humanity:* a subject that students must be *required* to take along with the ones they really want.

Now I, for one, do not believe that a college course in Lunchroom Management or Clothing Selection is preferable to one in

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aesthetics or Greek history. I am not at all sure that the first two are the more practical. But I do not believe that any number of eloquent pleas for recapturing the "lost soul" of society is going to entice students into the Colleges of Liberal Arts. In fact any students who are attracted by the grandiloquent phrases are likely to be aesthetes, impractical idealists, or potential school teachers. Boys and girls from wealthy homes may come also, but they come for very practical reasons: four years of pleasant life, social polish, and a certificate of culture useful in certain social circles. As a rule the Liberal Arts College is very efficient in supplying these requirements. Certainly more efficient than a school offering training in lunchroom management or methods of teaching shorthand.

It is quite another matter to educate one to appreciate "what is truly and enduringly beautiful" or to "recognize or retrieve . . . eternal truths." Too often it is assumed that these things can be taught as entities unrelated to other considerations — that there is a world in which morality, truth, and beauty exist apart from the ethics of business, or the truth of a scientific or social theory, or the beauty of a particular poem or office building.

The advocates of liberal arts training will deny this. They will argue that a knowledge of philosophy helps one to understand the values in contemporary life (or more often the alleged lack of values); that mathematics trains the accurate use of the reason (an idea long since exploded by psychologists); that history helps in an understanding of today's politics; and that literature and art give one standards of judgment to apply to contemporary literature or art, or that they do something or other for one's personality — something very fine, of course.

Students often pay lip service to these doctrines: they say that they want college to give them "culture." But that is almost always a secondary aim. The vast majority of students are in college to become engineers, accountants, physicians, social workers, teachers — or even chiropodists and undertakers. If at the same time they can acquire the mystic quality called culture by taking a few courses in language, history, and literature they are willing to spare a little time from their real purpose. But few premeds will elect Fine Arts 1 if it conflicts with Biology 127; and fewer civil engineers will study Chaucer when they can get Strength of Materials instead.

All this may be simply an indication of mistaken values, the symptoms of a materialistic national culture, the worship of false gods. I believe that it is rather an indication of faulty methods. Two deeply religious men may both desire the kingdom of heaven; one may try to reach it by praying continually, wearing a hair shirt, and refusing to bathe; the other by ministering to the sick. It is quite possible that the second man will find very little time to examine his soul or clarify points of theology. He therefore spends less time on his "specialty" than does the ascetic, but he may be more fully obtaining his objective.

The analogy may apply to a liberal education. It is quite possible that extreme specialization is not the best preparation for most professions or intellectual occupations. It is impossible in a paper of this sort to support this point of view in detail. But it is a point of view almost universal among believers in a liberal education.

However, I venture upon two assertions: one, that the liberal arts colleges fail to implement this point of view; and two, that they fail to demonstrate its validity. To put the case more specifically: I believe that the liberal arts college fails to relate its work to the world the students must face, and that it fails to make the student understand its aims. In colloquial phraseology, the liberal arts college high-hats the vocational phases of education, and it fails to sell itself to its customers.

Almost all the defenders of a liberal education use a tone of moral superiority. The phrases quoted at the beginning of this essay suggest an out-of-this-world point of view. Yet if the liberal arts college is to survive, it must function in this world and must make that function clear. In a democratic society, the primary function demanded of a college or university is that it prepare its students to earn a living. The point of view stated by Jacques Barzun: "Vocational training has nothing to do with education," implies that education is only for a leisure class or a scholarly elite. Only at their peril can liberal arts colleges cater to a Brahmin caste. Most students and parents are certainly not going to be less materialistic about their bread and butter than are the defenders of a liberal education.

It may seem that this premise denies any possibility of preserving the liberal arts. Not at all. I have already pointed out that the arts colleges insist on the superior value of

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their training as preparation for an intellectual vocation or profession. I agree with this point of view. In the rapidly changing world of business, technology, and social order, a narrowly specialized training is often obsolete before the student graduates. Many of my former college mates are in fields of activity which did not exist twenty years ago. No vocational training then offered could have helped them. A contemporary radio news analyst would certainly find his college work in European history more valuable than his course in News Story Write-Up. History, language, literature, philosophy have vocational value. More obvious is the vocational aspect of social science and psychology. All these are elements in a liberal arts program.

Specifically I suggest that the liberal arts colleges integrate their programs with vocational fields. For instance: what courses should be elected by a student interested in entering the diplomatic field, or social security, or a host of other governmental activities for which the A.B. course is the best preparation? Few faculty advisers have this information. Students themselves are often unaware that certain of these fields exist; more have no idea how to prepare for them. So, instead, they take a degree in marketing or dentistry or advertising — anything with a label indicating possible usefulness. Students are often amazed to find that they can enter law school with an A.B. in history and literature instead of a B.S. in "pre-law."

This brings us to my second recommendation: a better publicizing of the vocational usefulness of a liberal arts education. Bulletins and catalogs of vocational schools often have much to say about opportunities in the fields they train for; those of liberal arts colleges are extremely reticent on this point. Except for occasional listings of requirements for medical school or teaching, there is almost no discussion of so crass a topic as preparing for a job. For instance, in a recent study of training for the field of social security, Karl de Schweinitz states that the best possible background is the academic discipline and a cultural education. It is significant that this study was made for the Social Security Board and not under the auspices of the colleges.

All this may seem to imply that the liberal arts colleges should turn themselves into vocational schools. The answer is that they are vocational schools and always have been. Harvard College was founded specifically to train ministers of the gospel. The classical education of the nineteenth century was regarded as the best possible training for the law and the church. Today students in liberal arts colleges are preparing to become biologists, psychologists, sociologists, teachers, and lawyers.

What I suggest, then, is not a revision of the curriculum: no addition of gadget courses to attract uncritical customers. It is simply that the colleges accept the fact that they have a vocational function and that they exercise that function intelligently. That means vocational guidance for students, not in a haphazard way, but by trained counselors with adequate budgets for research; it means well run placement bureaus; it means making vocational information readily available to students; and it means a constant and intelligent study of the changing needs of the community. It is shortsighted if not unethical to turn out thousands more pre-meds than the medical schools will accept; to produce English teachers far in excess of demand, and at the same time to ignore fields where educated persons are desperately needed.

But what happens to "culture" in all this? Does it mean that we forget all about the permanently true and beautiful? My answer is that "culture" is always a by-product of something else. Shakespeare's plays are now studied chiefly for their cultural value; they were written to attract patrons to the box office. Architects have always designed their buildings for specific utilitarian purposes. Stiegel produced his famous glass for a market; he went bankrupt when he overestimated the market. The arts have always been closely linked with the business of living. It is only when they become art for art's sake that they wither. Similarly, culture for culture's sake becomes exotic and unreal. If literature and history and philosophy cannot be related to the life of the community, they have no very important values. In other words, if a psychologist is not a better psychologist because he knows something about the development of human thought and the expression of human nature through art, then there is little hope for philosophy, history, and literature.

Many of the defenders of a liberal education emphasize its broader social values: the making of intelligent citizens; the training for life rather than making a living; the understanding of ethical and moral values. But a member of a democratic society functions in that society chiefly through his occu-

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pation. A man's contribution to his age is above all his contribution as a physician, a manufacturer, a chemist, a writer, a publisher. A physician's knowledge or lack of knowledge of sociology will appear during dinner table conversations and at the polls. But it is vastly more important in his work as a physician and member of a medical association. It is there that his knowledge or lack of knowledge chiefly affects society.

Culture does not function in a vacuum. The "lost soul" of society will be found not in college courses, but in the market place and the laboratory and the court of law. The liberal arts college cannot educate some sort of mythical men of vision; it must educate chemists and sociologists and journalists with vision. When it fully accepts this function, it will no longer be troubled by falling enrollments. The professors can cease to worry about their own bread and butter when they recognize that even an A.B. must eat.

In the Winter Issue....

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM will present

Henry Hazlitt and Max Lerner

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Force and Freedom: Remarks on the English Edition of Jacob Burckhardt's "Reflections on History"

Ernst Cassirer

THE first English edition of Jacob Burckhardt's *Reflections on History* was published last year under the title *Force and Freedom*.[1] This English edition comes rather late. The first draft of this book was made by Burckhardt in the summer of 1868 — about 75 years ago. If we take into consideration the radical changes of our political and social life made since that period the book seems to belong to a remote past. We may study it with the attention and respect due to a great historian; but we should hardly expect to meet here with anything that has a bearing upon our own actual problems. Yet when reading the book we find quite the opposite. There are only a few historical books that, at this very moment, are so much alive and so apt to arouse a keen interest as Burckhardt's book. In a certain sense it is much nearer to our generation than it was to his own. For what we find here are not only general reflections on the character of historical knowledge. What Burckhardt gives is perhaps the first and most penetrating analysis of that great crisis of European civilization that began to develop in the second half of

◎ The distinguished German philosopher and Renaissance scholar, ERNST CASSIRER, has lived in the United States since 1941. He was visiting professor of philosophy at Yale until September of this year, when he assumed the same post at Columbia. Professor Cassirer's latest book, *An Essay on Man*, appears this fall, and another work, *The Myth of the State*, will be published next year.

[1] *Force and Freedom, Reflections on History*. Edited by James Hastings Nichols. Pantheon Books Inc., New York, 1943.

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the nineteenth century and that now seems to have reached its crucial point.

Burckhardt was perhaps the only great historian of the nineteenth century who, instead of a genetic view, took a *static* view of human history. He was not especially interested in the shifting scenes of historical life. His attention was engrossed in the great current and typical features. He openly defied that ideal of "specialization" that is one of the most characteristic features of the science of the nineteenth century.

It was this mental attitude that led Burckhardt far away from the "positivism" of his own time. It was never his aim simply to collect facts and to know "all" the facts. "For the man determined really to learn, that is, to become rich in mind," he declared, "a single source, happily chosen, can do duty, to a certain extent, for the whole multitude, since, by a simple function of his brain, he can discern and feel the general in the particular. He must believe that every dust-heap contains jewels of knowledge, whether of general value or of personal value to us. A single line from an otherwise worthless author may kindle a light to guide all our further steps. . . . But beyond the labor we expend on sources the prize beckons in those great moments and fateful hours when, from things we have imagined long familiar, a sudden intuition dawns."

Burckhardt's life was rich in such great moments, and his work is filled with intuitions of that sort. As the American editor of the *Reflections on History* rightly remarks, every one of Burckhardt's books was a new discovery — but in interpretation, not in documentation. What gives to these works their greatest and most characteristic value is not so much the collection as the selection of the material, of the "significant" facts. Burckhardt himself always saw the task of the true historian from this perspective. "Any specialized knowledge of facts," he said, "possesses, in addition to its value as knowledge or thought in a particular field, a universal or historical value, in that it illuminates one phase of the changeful spirit of man; yet, placed in the right connection, it testifies at the same time to the continuity and immortality of that spirit." (p. 94) For the spirit knows change,

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but no mortality. It is never the same, and it is always the same; it is always building a new house, but its general structure remains invariable.

In the beginning of his *Reflections on History* Burckhardt declares, paradoxically enough, that his study will, in a certain sense, be "pathological in kind." As a matter of fact, after having begun as an historian of European civilization, he became, in his later period, more and more the pathologist of this civilization. He describes all the symptoms of the disease with an astounding lucidity and perspicuity.

The editor of the English translation of Burckhardt's *Reflections on History*, James Hastings Nichols, has inserted into his excellent introduction to the work a special chapter, entitled "Burckhardt as Prophet." "As a penetrating and objective critic of the nineteenth century," he says, "Burckhardt was in a position to make better guesses about the twentieth than the majority of men who wrote the newspaper editorials and the histories, delivered the sermons, the campaign speeches, or otherwise carried on their activities chiefly within the domain of the idols of theatre, market place, and tribe."

What Burckhardt foresaw and what he feared was the ever increasing ascendancy of the "collective" spirit over individual judgment. "The utmost effort and self-denial," he declared, "will be necessary if individuals are to remain creatively independent in view of the relation in which they stand to the daily press, to cosmopolitan traffic, to world exhibitions. As to the masses they want only their peace and their pay. If they get them from a republic or monarchy, they will cling to either. If not, without much ado they will support the first constitution to promise them what they want." (p. 297 ff.) Then a long voluntary subjection under individual *Führers* and usurpers is in prospect. People no longer believe in principles, but will, periodically, probably, in saviors. "For this reason authority will again raise its head in the pleasant twentieth century, and a terrible head." "My mental picture of the *terribles simplificateurs* who will overrun our old Europe is not a pleasant one," said Burckhardt in a

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letter to a friend. "Now and then, in imagination I already see such fellows bodily before me and I will describe them to you."

From these and other passages the American editor concludes that Burckhardt "indeed in 1871 understood 1941 better than most of us did in that year itself." But even this judgment does not do full justice to his foresight and sagacity. For Burckhardt had formed the same opinion twenty-five years *before* the war between Germany and France. "Believe me," he wrote in a letter to Gottfried Kinkel on April 19, 1845, "the political nation to which some people boastfully appeal does not yet exist. Instead of this there exists a mass, in which a great many splendid talents and characters are slumbering; but which, as a mass, could easily become an instrument in the hands of every rascal and then would behave like a wild beast. *Sapienti sat!*"

What was the reason for this deeper understanding of the forthcoming danger? It has been said that Burckhardt, as a Swiss and as a citizen of the small city-state of Basel, did not have to struggle with the same prejudices as the majority of the political historians of the nineteenth century. He saw the general development of our political life in a wider perspective and from a vantage-ground that gave him a real superiority of judgment. He was not blindfolded by national ambitions and vanity, and he was not prone to any sort of imperialism. All this is true enough, but it is only half of the truth. We must explain his attitude not by mere personal, but by universal reasons — by his general conception of the meaning and value of human culture.

In the second half of the nineteenth century almost all the German historians were under the spell of the Hegelian concept of history. Hegel was regarded as the spokesman for all historical thought. For in his system history had been elevated to a rank and dignity that it had never possessed before. If we accept the Hegelian thesis, it is not nature, but history, which is the true reality: the manifestation of the "absolute Idea." Universal History had been declared by Hegel to be "the exhibition of Spirit in the process of working out the knowledge of that which it is potentially. . . . And as the germ bears in itself the whole nature of the tree, and the taste and form of its fruits, so do the

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first traces of Spirit virtually contain the whole of the history."

From the point of view of the great historians that was indeed a new philosophic interpretation of history — and a very fascinating one. But Burckhardt never was under this fascination. He regarded himself much more as an artist than as a philosopher. "In my whole life," he says in a letter that he wrote as a youth of twenty-four years, "I have never thought philosophically. If I cannot start out from an intuition, I am not able to do anything. Whatever I build up historically is not a result of criticism and speculation, but of imagination which tries to fill the gaps of intuition. Hence to me history, to a large extent, is still poetry; it is a series of the most beautiful and picturesque compositions."

If there was any thinker whose general views were acceptable to Burckhardt, it was not Hegel, but Hegel's strongest opponent, his philosophical antipode. Burckhardt used to speak of Schopenhauer as "*the* philosopher." But here we have to face a real paradox. How could an *historian* — and an historian of the rank of Burckhardt — ever give such a judgment? "Like Schopenhauer," says the American editor Nichols in his introduction, "Burckhardt felt that historical consciousness is what distinguishes the civilized man from the barbarian, and that the race has a sacred duty to preserve the memory of its greatest trials and triumphs."

This statement seems to me wrong. Burckhardt's view is widely divergent from Schopenhauer's. It is true that Schopenhauer had spoken of history as the rational consciousness of the human race. Yet on the other hand he emphatically denied any universal value of historical knowledge. According to him history has no reality and no truth. What it narrates is in fact only the long, heavy, and confused dream of humanity. Such a conception could not be accepted by Burckhardt. Schopenhauer spoke and judged as a metaphysician and as a Platonist. He drew a sharp line of demarcation between the sensible and the supra-sensible world, the world of "becoming" and of "being," and since history belongs to the former it is devoid of all true reality. "The Hegelians who regard the philosophy of history as indeed the chief end of all philosophy," he says, "are to be referred to

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Plato, who unweariedly repeats that the object of philosophy is that which is unchangeable and always remains, not that which now is thus and now otherwise. All those who set up such constructions of the course of the world, or as they call it, of history, have failed to grasp the principal truth of all philosophy, that what is is at all times the same — all becoming and arising are only seeming; the Ideas alone are permanent."

Burckhardt finds permanence and truth in quite a different sphere. He does not seek it in eternal essences, in things in themselves or Platonic ideas. His field — the field of an historian, not a metaphysician — is man's empirical existence. Hence he is, frankly and literally, anthropocentric. To him the world of human doings and human sufferings is no mere fugitive shadow; it is, on the contrary, the very core of reality. "We shall start out," he says, "from the one point accessible to us, the one eternal centre of all things — man, suffering, striving, doing, as he is and was and ever shall be." (p. 82)

It is this conception of the character and task of history that is the distinctive mark of Burckhardt's thought. It has put its stamp upon his whole work. It has determined both the choice and the treatment of his historical subjects. He became deeply engrossed in the art, the literature and civilization of the Italian Renaissance. For what he found there was the fulfillment of all his interests and his highest ideals. He saw the individual man in his struggle against all those traditional and authoritative powers that had hitherto determined his life — shaking off his burden and looking around himself to find a new world and a new depth of his personality. All this is described in an incomparable and fascinating style in that famous chapter of Burckhardt's book that deals with "the discovery of nature and man": "To the discovery of the outward world the Renaissance added a still greater achievement, by first discerning and bringing to light the full, whole nature of man. This period gave the highest development to individuality, and then led the individual to the most zealous and thorough study of himself in all forms and under all conditions."

By this conception the centre of gravity of the historical world

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was shifted. Hegel had concentrated his historical thought upon the political world. The State had become the only subject that admits of and that deserves a historical treatment. "In the history of the world" — he says in the introduction to his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* — "only those peoples can come under our notice, which form a state. For it must be understood that this latter is the realization of freedom, i.e., of the absolute final aim, and that it exists for its own sake. It must further be understood that all the worth which the human being possesses — all spiritual reality, he possesses only through the State. Thus only he is fully conscious. . . . The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth."

This view of Hegel's was in sharp contradiction to all Burckhardt's personal ideals and to his conception of the meaning and value of human culture. He could not share this adoration of the omnipotent state. To say that man possesses his whole spiritual reality only through the State was to him blasphemy. He regarded this Hegelian deification of the state as sheer idolatry, which he resisted with all his intellectual and moral power.

To Hegel the state was not only the consummation of history, but also of the moral order, the very incarnation of right and justice. "The state," he says in his *Philosophy of Right*, "is the spirit that dwells and realizes itself in the world through consciousness, while in nature the spirit actualizes itself only as a stranger, as dormant spirit. It is the course of God through the world that constitutes the State." Burckhardt saw the problem in an entirely different light. To yield to the pressure of the omnipotent state was to him not an ethical demand, but a mortal sin.

But Burckhardt's voice — the voice of a very original and, at the same time, of a very lonely thinker — was scarcely heard among the historians of his own generation. Most of them had not only accepted but exaggerated the solution of Hegel. "The essence of the state," declared H. v. Treitschke in an essay, *Bundesstaat und Einheitsstaat*, "is in the first place Power, in the second place Power, and in the third place once more: Power." These words, written in 1864, as Burckhardt was beginning to

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write down his *Reflections on History*, are characteristic of the period. Burckhardt found the same conviction among all the political historians of Germany.

"Since the state comprehends all moral organisms," said Konstantin Rössler in his *System der Staatslehre*, "the doctrine of the state contains the whole objective Ethics, or Ethics in general. In so far it is distinguished from morality. Morality or subjective Ethics (*subjektive Sittlichkeit*) belongs to Theology." At a meeting of the parliament at Frankfort, Dahlmann exclaimed, "The course of Power is the only one that can satisfy and satiate our fermenting desire for freedom. For what the German means is not freedom alone — it is rather the power that hitherto was denied to him, and which he longs for."

To Burckhardt the concept of securing freedom through power was very dangerous, or at least very naive. He did not look upon the State as "the Divine Idea as it exists on earth." He had a keen feeling for all the demonic powers slumbering in the State. "Power," he says in the beginning of his *Reflections on History*, "is by nature evil." Burckhardt even went so far as to declare that a powerful political life and a truly cultural life are, after all, incompatible with each other. A people cannot hope to be culturally significant and politically significant at the same time.

"Oh, how mistaken the poor German nation will be," he wrote after the outbreak of the war between Germany and France, "if she thinks that at home she can set the musket in the corner and devote herself to the arts and happiness of peace! The device will be: 'More military training'; and after a while no one will any longer be able to say what life is really for. What is most alarming, however, is not the present war but the era of wars into which we have entered, and for this the new spirit must be prepared. Oh, how much that has been dear to educated men they will have to throw overboard as spiritual luxury, and under what different conditions this new generation will grow up."

"We cannot share," says Burckhardt in his *Reflections on History*, "that invitingly optimistic view according to which society came into being first, and the State arose as its protector, its nega-

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tive aspect, its warden and defender. Human nature is not like that. The truth is that power is in itself evil. Without the slightest regard for religion, the privilege of egoism, which is denied to the individual, is bestowed on the State. Weaker neighbors are subjected and annexed, or in some way deprived of their independence. . . . And once on that road, there is no stopping. There is an excuse for everything, since 'mere peaceableness would have led nowhere' and 'the others do the same. . . .' The upshot of the whole process is the beautiful theory of 'unjustified existences.'" (p. 110 ff.)

Burckhardt could feel and speak in this way because he never was tempted by the idol of power. His was a cultural ideal; and his historical knowledge had taught him that the great ages of culture were not those protected by mighty states. "The first *perfected* example of the modern State with supreme coercive power exercised on nearly all branches of culture is to be seen in the France of Louis XIV and in his imitators. At the same time the State acquired the habit of an aggressive foreign policy, of large standing armies and other costly instruments of force, in short, of a separate life completely divorced from its own higher aims. It became a mere dreary self-enjoyment of power, a pseudo-organism existing by and for itself. . . . Literature and even philosophy became servile in their glorification of the State, and art monumentally servile; they created only what was acceptable at Court. Intellect put itself out to board in every direction and cringed before convention." (p. 179 ff.)

What made this judgment possible, and even necessary, was Burckhardt's view of the aim of historical knowledge — and of the function of knowledge in general. He is one of the most recent witnesses to that classical ideal of a pure contemplative life which had been created by the great Greek thinkers. He put the *vita contemplativa* on a much higher level than the *vita activa*. And history, when understood and studied in the right way, meant to him the consummation of a purely contemplative life. It cannot reach this aim as long as it is still infected with the greatest evils of mankind: with vanity, with ambition, and with greed. True historical knowledge arises only if we begin to rid our-

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selves of all personal desires and of all national aspirations.

There are only two alternatives, between which we have to choose. One is the will to power, whose behavior towards the outside world can be seen in its most naive form in the ancient world potentates, who conquered and enslaved and plundered and pillaged far and wide. Followed by their booty and their slaves, they entered Thebes or Nineveh in triumph and were regarded as the beloved of God — till a new and yet more powerful potentate arose.

For power "is not stability but a lust, and *ipso facto* insatiable, therefore unhappy in itself and doomed to make others unhappy. Inevitably, in its pursuit, peoples fall into the hands both of ambitious dynasties seeking to maintain themselves, and of individual 'great men,' i.e., of the forces which have the furtherance of culture least at heart." (p. 184)

On the other hand, we find the will to knowledge, and first and foremost, to intuitive — that is, to historical — knowledge. "The highest mission of the history of mankind," wrote Burckhardt in a letter, "the evolution of the mind to freedom — has become to me a leading principle. Hence my study can never be unfaithful to myself nor can it let me sink downwards. It will remain my good genius throughout my life."

This ideal that Burckhardt had formed as a youth of twenty-four years remained the lodestar of his life and his whole work as an historian. To him it was not only an intellectual but also a high ethical idea. His conception of the educational value of history was based upon this view. We must safeguard our impartiality against the invasion of history by wishful thinking. The main obstacle in the way is the confusion of insight by our wishes, hopes, and fears, and the incalculable factor of mental contagions. "While as men of a definite epoch, we must inevitably pay our passive tribute to historical life, we must at the same time approach it in a spirit of contemplation." Such a spirit will show us historical life in its true shape and reconcile us to its inevitable evils, its sufferings and miseries, its failures and crimes.

Treated in this way our study of history is not only a right and

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a duty; it is also a supreme need. It is our freedom in the very awareness of universal bondage and the stream of necessities. But in order to reach this freedom we must first get rid of those obstacles that constantly threaten it. We must renounce our personal wishes and idiosyncrasies, and even our national prejudices and ambitions:

> If history is ever to help us to solve even an infinitesimal part of the great and grievous riddle of life, we must quit the regions of personal and temporal foreboding for a sphere in which our view is not forthwith dimmed by self. It may be that a calmer consideration from a greater distance may yield a first hint of the true nature of life on earth. . . . Bias, however, is particularly prone to make its appearance in the guise of patriotism, so that true knowledge finds its chief rival in our preoccupation with the history of our own country. There are certainly things in which the history of a man's own country will always take precedence, and it is our bounden duty to occupy ourselves with it. Yet it should always be balanced by some other great line of study, if only because it is so intimately interwoven with our desires and fears, and because the bias it imparts to our mind is always towards intentions and away from knowledge. In the realm of thought, it is supremely just and right that all frontiers should be swept away. . . . The truest study of our national history will be that which considers our own country in parallels and in relation to world history and its laws, as a part of a great whole, illumined by the same heavenly bodies as have shone upon other times and other peoples, threatened with the same pitfalls and one day to be engulfed in the same eternal night and perpetuated in the same great universal tradition.

Then we shall understand the real value of historical knowledge: "The mind must transmute into a possession the remembrance of its passage through the ages of the world. What was once joy and sorrow must now become knowledge, as it must in the life of the individual." These words from the introduction of Burckhardt's *Reflections on History* provide the best interpretation of his historical method. They account for the exceptional place that his work occupies in the historiography of the nineteenth century. As Friedrich Gundolf rightly says in his introduction to an unpublished work, *German Historians from Herder to Burckhardt*, Jacob Burckhardt is perhaps not the most powerful German historian of the nineteenth century (this title is due to Mommsen), but he is surely the most imaginative and most limpid mind — "the sage among historians."

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Finnegans Wake: An Anthropological Study

Richard V. Chase

It is now five years since *Finnegans Wake* was first published in its entirety. Attitudes toward Joyce's book have varied from the enthusiasm of the rapt initiate to the hostility of the frankly puzzled. I believe, however, that conservative opinion is generally adverse and that it has crystallized into the following objections: 1) that the book is irreverent, anti-intellectual, and tries to destroy the past; 2) that it is coterie literature and, as such, immoral; 3) that it is not a novel, though it professes to be one; 4) that it is simply a book of pedantic and irresponsible word-play; 5) that it is a parochial curiosity because it is based on the questionable technicalities of Vico, Freud, and Jung; 6) that the rewards are not worth the effort of reading Joyce's language.

I am sure that the first two objections are the mistakes of a particularly dense and solemn kind of moralizing which, in any case, Joyce's endless good humor gracefully disarms. The last four objections have more substance, but they are very far from decisive. I think all of these criticisms arise from a failure to see what *Finnegans Wake* is, and what it is about. The reader, of course, must be prepared for an infinite variety of puns, jingles, and allusions; but if he gets bogged down in the language and fails to see beyond it, he is lost.[1] It is a great pity to put this book

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[1] A brief nomenclature of the book may be in order here. The main characters are Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker and his wife Maggie. Earwicker is of Norse descent; he is in his fifties, protestant, blond, overweight and neurotic. He keeps a Dublin pub, called the Bristol. Maggie is much younger than her husband, and there is no longer any sexual love between them. As Anna Livia

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aside unexamined; for it is a record of the impressions of our crucial epoch of history on one of its brightest intelligences. What I wish to point out here is that *Finnegans Wake*, far from being the essence of coterie thought, is an extremely orthodox book.

We shall have to put our minds at ease, of course, as to why Joyce's book is written in the form of a dream. There are at least three immediate reasons: In our time, when literature and the drama are so meager, the dream furnishes to any candid introvert a kind of aesthetic sharpness, a sense of tragedy and comedy for which he seeks elsewhere in vain. The dream allegory is a traditional literary form which allows certain kinds of symbolic synthesis; *Finnegans Wake* is a lineal descendant of the medieval allegories — like *Piers Plowman* or *The Romance of the Rose* — in which we behold the symbols of sexual, social, and moral principles through the mind of a dreamer. And finally, the dream, especially as psychoanalysis interprets it, is a form of universal mythology, and universal mythology has a specially modern importance.

Finnegans Wake may be compared with the novels of Cervantes and Rabelais because, like theirs, it is closely aware of history, and as a comic novel it makes use of a great comic device: the clash of two epochs. We shall therefore have to decide just what the conception of history embodied in this book is. (I avoid a discussion of Vico's cyclical theories, for even though Joyce makes use of them, I do not think they help to explain what is important about the book.) Briefly Joyce's historical perspective comes from the feeling that an age of rationalism and belief in progress has ended and that it is being followed by an age of religion and prophecy and primitivism. Our age is no doubt

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Plurabelle she symbolizes life and fertility. The Earwickers have three children: a post-adolescent daughter Isobel, and two younger sons, the twins Jerry (Shem) and Kevin (Shaun). The book describes the dreams of Earwicker as he lies abed after a summer Saturday night of barkeeping. The Bristol and its twelve habitual customers, Phoenix Park, Chapelizod, the Hill of Howth (which symbolizes Earwicker, the male principle), the River Liffey (Anna Livia Plurabelle, the female principle), and other Dublin landmarks continually appear in a variety of metamorphoses. The initials HCE and ALP, which Joyce uses liberally to indicate that he is talking about one or the other of his main characters, guide the reader through the maze. The book opens in the middle of a sentence, the beginning of which is on the last page. As every student of *Finnegans Wake* must be, I am indebted to Edmund Wilson's "The Dream of H. C. Earwicker" and to Harry Levin's *James Joyce*.

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characterized by a new Alexandrianism, and *Finnegans Wake* is Alexandrian in two ways: it is a piece of erudite synthesis, and it is full of mystic cultism. It has that sense of ever-present apocalypse, that sense of repeating the dying years of antiquity, of searching again for salvation, which we feel more and more these days. Gilbert Murray describes this historical transition in a famous passage:

> There is a change in the whole relation of the writer to the world about him. The new quality is not specifically Christian: it is just as marked in the Gnostics and Mithras-worshippers as in the Gospels and the Apocalypse, in Julian and Plotinus as in Gregory and Jerome. It is hard to describe. It is a rise of asceticism, of mysticism, in a sense of pessimism; a loss of self-confidence, of hope in this life and of faith in normal human effort; a despair of patient inquiry, a cry for infallible revelation; an indifference to the welfare of the state, a conversion of the soul to God.

The "new quality" in *Finnegans Wake*, as in Eliot, Huxley, Jung, Lawrence, and A. J. Toynbee is like the quality Murray describes; it is not "specifically Christian" either; it is rather a universal primitivism.

Professor Toynbee's great *Study of History* (which is not yet finished, though six volumes have already appeared) may possibly help us to understand *Finnegans Wake*. Toynbee believes that Western civilization has set out on the path to extinction, but that, like other civilizations, it will achieve the momentary stability of an Indian Summer. It will purchase a reprieve, that is, from the death sentence which has been passed against it, as did the Romans — by imposing a universal or "oecumenical" rule upon the world. It is useful to think of certain works of literature as partaking of the spirit of this oecumenical state and, indeed, as being oecumenical in themselves — such works, for example, as Toynbee's own *Study of History*, Eliot's *Waste Land*, and Frazer's *Golden Bough*. Along with *Finnegans Wake*, these works seem to me *oecumenical* in a sense in which few other works are. *Finnegans Wake*, then, is a universal book; and it attains its universality, like the other works I have mentioned (and like Christianity itself) through a religious pan-primitivism.

Joyce's book *is* a universe. It has no beginning and no end;

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it is a continuum whose space bends back upon itself in the manner of Einstein's universe. In this universe, as Eddington says, an observer, ideally, can see not only what is about him but also what *was* about him some 6,000 million years before, since it takes light that long to circle the spherical universe. Similarly, if we stand at any point in Joyce's novel with Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, our hero, and look in any direction, we see what was in Earwicker's place ages before: namely, one of his "mutuomorphomutations" in "the paleologic scene," such as "Homo Capite Erectus," "our hagious curious encestor," or "Humpheres Cheops Exarchus." The events in *Finnegans Wake* take place at "no spatial time." The language of *Finnegans Wake*, as well as the universe of the modern astronomers, captures the whole of time. At that point in the cycle of the expanding universe at which it is most fully expanded, language is an even distribution of sounds filling a finite space. These sounds resolve themselves into meaning; in some parts of the universe they remain chaotic and confused; in other parts they become recognizable constellations.

Finnegans Wake is a modern version of the Bible. It retells the Old Testament story of the creation, the fall, and the beginning of society in the family. It retells the New Testament story of the death and resurrection of the Savior. Darwin, Freud, and Frazer, as we shall see, have had their effect on Joyce's idea of the Bible. First, then, one has to think of the Earwickers as the primeval family in a newly created world. Next one has to think of Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker as the god who dies and rises from the dead, and Maggie Earwicker as the Great Mother of all life.

As an anthropologist, Joyce adopts the traditional theory that the first age of the world was an age of promiscuity: the time of Anna Livia Plurabelle's (i.e., Maggie's) flirtatious youth, "when hoops ran high . . . and everybilly lived alove with everybiddy else." This was followed by the age of matriarchy, when "Venuses were gigglibly temptatrix, vulcans guffawably eruptious and the whole wives' world frockful of fickles." The age of patriarchy ensued when the sons declared war upon the father and the father imposed the severest autocracy of which he was

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capable. Thus patriarchal civilization begins as Freud (following Hobbes and Darwin) had maintained: in a state of war. The early pages of *Finnegans Wake* reverberate with the clash of primeval demigods, fighting with the "shoutmost shoviality."

Humphrey and Maggie are Adam and Eve, and Dublin's Phoenix Park is the Garden of Eden. But the Earwickers are also father and mother of the primeval family horde as Freud pictures it in his *Totem and Tabu*. The original sin is incest (here Freud is supported by the conclusion of anthropologists that the incest tabu is nearly universal among primitive peoples); and the Earwicker family is troubled in Humphrey's dream by incestuous desires. The clashes within the family which arise from the expression and repression of these desires are graciously described as "the family umbroglio." This primeval family is the archetype of modern civilization, for out of desire and repression come the energies which have shaped our society, our religion, and our art. As Joyce says "our ethnarch" (Earwicker) is "ultimendly respunchable for the hubbub caused in Edenborough." Earwicker's sin, passed down through his descendants, is responsible for our tough and difficult civilization: "framm Sin fromm Son, acity arose," and here "acity" means not only "a city" — the symbol of our megalopolitan society — but the enlightened culture which can think in abstract words ending in a-c-i-t-y.

Finnegans Wake has, besides its Book of Genesis, its books of genealogy. All the characters have a "sibspecious connection." They are

> all old Sators of the Sowsceptre highly nutritius family histrionic, genitricksling with Avus [HCE] and Avia [ALP], that simple pair, and descendant down on veloutypads by a vuncular process to Nurus and Noverca, those notorious nepotists, circumpictified in their sobrine census, patriss all of them by the glos on their germane faces and their socerine eyes like transparents of vitricus, patruuts to a man, the archimade levirs of his ekonome world.

Joyce agrees with Freud and the Old Testament, then, that sex is a prime principle of society, and that society begins with the family. But sex is not the only social principle. The progress of the seasons and the fortunes of the crops, as Frazer says, also deter-

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mine the forms of human institutions. The divine king must be killed by his people if vegetation fails and society falls on evil days.

Earwicker cuts a tragi-comic figure as the Frazerian divine king. Joyce associates Earwicker with Tim Finnegan, the hero of the Irish comic song from which the novel gets its name. The song tells the story of a contractor who fell with his hod from a ladder and was taken for dead. His friends procured a gallon of whiskey and celebrated a wake with loud lamentation. The resurrection of Finnegan, and the happy ending of the song, takes place when some of the whiskey is spilled on his body. Earwicker is a middle-aged neurotic, a portmanteau representative of megalopolitan culture, whom Joyce aptly describes as a "neuropean." He sometimes feels that he is losing his nerve, and upon the vitality of the king, as Frazer shows at great length, depends the welfare of his people. Since Earwicker feels himself weakening (he fears that HCE means "his craft ebbing"), "Timm Finn again's tribes" appear to be suffering accordingly.

Joyce expands the story of Tim Finnegan into a myth of fertility. Finnegan-Earwicker dies and is resurrected in countless guises throughout the book. The conclusion of *The Golden Bough*, "*Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!*" is echoed in *Finnegans Wake:* "The keyn has passed. Lung left the keying." There is also the insistent cry of resurrection, given an Irish political note in "Irise Osirises." The widespread persistence of the death and fertility rites as he encounters them in his dream cause Earwicker to observe what Frazer demonstrates in *The Golden Bough:* that it is "strangely cult for this ceasing of the yore." Earwicker is the principal (whether as king, priest, or hero) of a great many fertility cults; he is Osiris, Attis, Adonis, Balder, an ancient Peruvian, an Ojibway, an Australian, an African, Horus, Dionysus, and Christ. Like Dionysus and Osiris, Earwicker is rent apart by his devotees, for the weal of the land: "as far as the wind dries and the rain eats and sun turns and water bounds he is exalted and depressed, assembled and asundered." As a totem god, he is eaten in countless primitive communions at the appropriate solstitial moment; at a Christian communion, teeth

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are sunk "through that pyth of a flowerwhite bodey." His death is the temporary solution for one of the world's oldest anxiety neuroses: in the "dates of ould lanxiety," Earwicker is sacrificed to the "Rainmaker."

Anna Livia Plurabelle is the principle of life and fertility; for her Earwicker lives and dies. If he is Osiris, she is Isis, his mother and his wife; if he is Attis and Adonis, she is Cybele and Astarte; if he is the savage "king of the wood" whom Frazer describes, she is the "fontmother" of all life. She is represented throughout *Finnegans Wake* as the River Liffey, which flows through Dublin into the Irish Sea. She is the "turfbrown mummy" of Earwicker; for the myth of Earwicker's birth is the myth of Moses, of Sargon, of Oedipus, of Tristan and of Osiris: he was born upon the shadowy waters. He was, in one metamorphosis, rescued from the waters by Pharaoh's daughter. He was "kaldt a bairn of brine, Wasserbourne the waterbaby." In one of his heroic Scandinavian guises, he is given a Viking sea-burial. He is born and resurrected among the thriving salmon of the Liffey.

It is the nature of Anna Livia Plurabelle to be self-perpetuating; she is the only species of absolute life in *Finnegans Wake*, since, as Joyce is always announcing, the doom of the rest of the world may be at hand. Whatever the nature of the universe, Joyce is sure that on the day of cosmic reckoning it will turn out to be an "anniverse." The building of Dublin and the bridging of the Liffey — the achievements of the mythical Tim Finnegan and his hod — do not impress Anna Livia Plurabelle: "for ann there is but one liv and hir newbridge is her old." She is "unleckylike," which is Joyce's way of saying that she is contemptuous of the ephemeral works of Finnegan-Earwicker; she smiles from her muddy waters at the idea that there may be laws of evolution and progress other than her own.

If Earwicker represents the intellect of the Western Enlightenment, Maggie is named, after Bergson's principle, "Elanio Vitale." If Earwicker, recalling the diagram of circles and triangles in his children's school notebooks, recognizes in them the polite learning of Europe, he also sees in them the phallic symbolism of the Great Mother. And if Earwicker represents Space,

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Anna Livia Plurabelle represents that mysterious, serpentine spirit conjured up by modern thought: Time. The Megalopolis, which attempts to escape Time by establishing itself in Space, is destined to torture itself with the world-weary, ambiguous question "Was liffe worth leaving?"

I have spoken of *Finnegans Wake* as a universe. We can now see that in describing the external universe through the veil of Earwicker's dream, it also describes the internal universe of the unconscious. The internal universe, too, captures the whole of time; it preserves, with that "prodigious conservatism" of which Jung spoke, the record of history. As Joyce says, "the world, mind, is, was and will be writing its wrunes for ever, man, on all matters that fall under the ban of our infrarational senses." Earwicker is all men: that is why he is called "Here Comes Everybody"; that is why he is "magnificently well worthy of any and all . . . universalization"; and that is why we discover in the dream of Earwicker a whole archeology of experience, "a jetsam litterage of convolvuli of times lost or strayed, of lands derelict and of tongues laggin too." Indeed, Earwicker descends below the human level of evolution. He is an animal, a fish, an insect, a compound known as H_2CE_3; he is an atom, in a nascent universe in which there is nothing but "atoms and ifs."

This opposition of the external and the internal universes leads us back to the life-and-death cycle which runs through *Finnegans Wake*. For in psychological terms the life-and-death cycle is the path of the mystic, the path back into the unconscious and the re-emergence of the mind with new vigor and new faith. A great many twentieth-century men of letters, having lost faith in rational thought, have become convinced that truth and goodness can be found in mysticism. Toynbee, to give one example, regards the mystic experience as the crucial one in human destiny.

Joyce too has his moments of mysticism. The rhythm of his book is the rhythm of his mind passing back and forth from the conscious and the civilized to the unconscious and the primitive. The mind of Earwicker rises and falls through the range of unconsciousness. The cries of his children, "Hide! Seek! Hide!

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Seek!" become "High! Sink! High! Sink! Highohigh! Sinkasink!" in time with the movements of his mind. This rhythm, embodied in the death-and-resurrection myths of all times and societies, is the main theme of *Finnegans Wake*.

It ought to be pointed out, however, that Joyce is not temperamentally a mystic; while one of the functions of *Finnegans Wake* is to record the apocalyptic mysticism and fertility worship of our time, another is to poke endless fun at them.

In point of language, *Finnegans Wake* has often been compared with Swift's *Journal to Stella* (Swift is often alluded to in Joyce's novel). In closing, I should like to suggest that it should also be compared with *Gulliver's Travels*. For *Gulliver* is one of those anthropological novels in which the hero identifies himself with the inhabitants of strange lands. Gulliver confessed his "insatiable desire . . . to see the world in every period of antiquity placed before me." I suppose *Finnegans Wake* may be considered the end-product of the tradition of the anthropological novel; the comparatively narrow experience of Gulliver attains universality in Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker.

There are, of course, various valid criticisms of Joyce's novel; each reader will find his own. What I have tried to suggest here is that the book cannot be put easily aside on the ground that it is irresponsibly unorthodox or of only special interest. If this is an oecumenical period of history, *Finnegans Wake* is our oecumenical novel. And far more striking than its exoticism is its appalling orthodoxy.

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To a Medieval Poet

George F. Whicher

Gautier, surnamed of Châtillon,
  Or for your birthplace called of Lille:
You lived eight centuries withdrawn
  From this, the second age of steel;
You were not free from want and fear,
But free to fashion a career.

You wrote of faith, you wrote of love,
  And so your songs may serve as wings
To raise our muddied souls above
  The ooze of crisis-conscious things —
As unconcerned with global war
As sparrows (yet unfallen) are.

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Occupied Country

Don Gordon

Quietly the men maimed and the men dead
are entering the unbroken American houses;
the last march is across the threshold of

these rooms into the abode of the civilian
mind. The tears given briefly upon their
return will not restore them; henceforth

they dwell with us, we are a somber country
occupied by heroes. Arms, legs, eyes and
the contours are obliterated; in unvisited

wards, torsos will exist for years. Who is brave
enough to bring them flowers or words? They lie
in battalions, honored along the plainly receding

shore; we assume the fallen weight and pleasure
of their lives. The hearing they abandoned is
acutely ours, the least sound may be perceived

as music; the eyes they closed we open on a
wider world than helicopters or the plastic
cars. Take for them in the nostrils the odor

of the rain, walk firmly for them among the most
desolate people: love is not to be separate from
them, love is our total statement in their name.

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Honorable Discharge

John A. P. Millet

THERE are many fields of thinking, both national and international, in which the conscience of the American people is provoking increasingly active and widespread interest. Among them is the popular theme of what is to be done for the returning service man. The increasing tide of questioning and of discussions, both public and private, is a measure of the uncertainty about the nature and scope of the problems involved, and about the provisions already made or being planned for the resolution of these problems.

We are bound that there will be no ex-service men selling apples on street corners, or risking prosecution as panhandlers. We do not want to see another bonus march to the Capitol. We fear that there may be other and worse effects on our young men than those arising from economic distress. Are we justified in entertaining such anxieties? Are we taking measures to prevent these disasters? Are such measures suited to the needs of the situation, or do they represent the well-meaning but misguided efforts of our sentimental idealists, or compromises effected between Congress and the heads of governmental bureaus? These are some of the questions which trouble the conscience of our citizens and have stirred those active in the broad field of human welfare to the need for coordinated planning of rehabilitation programmes on a nation-wide scale.

The magnitude of the problem is attested by the fact that already some 1,250,000 men have been discharged from the Armed Forces, and that about the same number have been rejected from

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the Induction Stations as unfit for service in the Armed Forces. Statistical analysis of the causes for discharge at the close of 1943 shows that almost 45% of all discharges were for some form of neuropsychiatric disability, and that this source of disability in our Armed Forces is about four times as common as any other single cause for discharge.

The question might well be raised as to why so many men whose psycho-physical organization was not robust enough to stand the strain of modern war were permitted to enter the Armed Forces in the first place. To this question there seem to be two significant and related answers. In the first place it should be admitted that our traditional democratic preference for playing the ostrich found us unprepared — both for the task of mobilizing rapidly a huge, effective Army and Navy, and for the employment of proper screening techniques, which could have been applied easily if the machinery had been blueprinted in advance of the emergency.

In the second place, the extraordinary strains imposed on the healthiest of human organisms by the ravages of isolation, disease, wounds, and repeated subjection to the terrors of mechanized warfare, have demonstrated all too clearly that a neuropsychiatric disability does not necessarily imply any weakness of psychic constitution in the individual afflicted by it. Every man has his own breaking point, and those who have not been subjected to these strains cannot claim to be accurate judges of the extent of their effects on any given individual.

The processes of screening both before and after induction have now been improved to such an extent that the flood of neuropsychiatric discharges may be expected to decrease. Furthermore, the former policy of getting rid of any soldier who had too much nuisance value, or who found adjustment to Army life difficult, has been replaced by the policy of trying hard to adjust the man to some function in the service. This enlightened policy should conserve manpower and prevent many unnecessary breakdowns.[1]

At the same time, the influx of discharged men is already

[1] It should be added that although it is generally conceded that some 50% of our neuropsychiatric disabilities could have been anticipated if proper screening had been instituted from the

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considerable, and with the increase in offensive action on all fronts the numbers of casualties may be expected to rise with alarming suddenness. What then are to be our attitudes toward these men? What are the tools with which we may give them substantial aid in readjustment?

First let it be said that every individual, every family, every employer, every welfare agency, and every community should recognize that a neuropsychiatric casualty is just as much a real casualty as is a man who has lost an arm or who has a liver abscess from amoebic dysentery. The terms "war nerves," "combat fatigue," "flak happy," or "war neurosis," enjoy a varying degree of popularity, and, in our professional and slang vocabularies, are the successors to the unfortunate term "shell shock" which was coined in the last war. The term does not matter. What does matter is that when a man is discharged with a neuropsychiatric disability he should be regarded and treated with the same consideration as his physically disabled comrades. The very fact that he has no wound to show for his illness makes the suffering so much the greater.

Just as there is every degree of individual resistance to emotional and nervous strain, so there is to be expected every variety of attitude among our returning service men. Fortunately, large numbers will have highly constructive or hopeful attitudes toward their disabilities and be eager "to get on with it," and, if the nature of the disability requires it, to take whatever specific re-training is necessary in order to be able to resume a life of self-support and independence. Such men may be counted upon to broaden the understanding of civilians as to the needs of other discharged men, and in some cases will provide excellent material for recruiting as experts in rehabilitation.

A second group, however, may have carried back from this traumatic experience a host of negative attitudes. They will hate

beginning, there is as yet no single or combined examination provided by the disciplines of medicine, psychiatry, and psychology, which can foretell with absolute certainty the degree of strain which a human being can support. It is, however, a very striking fact that the percentage of neuropsychiatric breakdowns in the expeditionary air forces is much lower than in the ground forces, and that the screening process for Air Cadets is of the most far-reaching and exhaustive character, because of the particular combination of technical ability and emergency responsiveness which air combat requires.

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and despise the civilian on principle; they will feel justified in adopting a "chip on the shoulder" attitude, convinced that they may thus arouse people to a realization of how much they have sacrificed, and how much the community owes them. Such men for the most part belong to the large group of psychopathic personalities, whose egocentric tendencies may have been recognized as unusual even in peacetime. Failure to get special consideration in the service is apt to lead them to repeated insubordination, and eventually to discharge. By this time the chip on the shoulder has become a splinter, deeply imbedded in the psychic flesh.

There will be others, too, who will believe their disability to be a mark of failure, and who will have a variety of emotional needs arising from this secret conviction. Some, for instance, will feel the need to be treated as heroes, others as martyrs. Some will be critical of the Service, others of the Government, others again of the President. There will be those who are ready to preach the gospel that this war was not justifiable, that it was "just a racket," that they have been fighting for Stalin or Churchill, not for the U. S. A. Among other destructive defenses which some may set up will be the wish to continue aggressive, anti-social behavior. The conditioning to attack as a virtue is not always easy to undo. There have already been sporadic cases of criminal violence reported, and there will undoubtedly be more. It is not, however, necessary to feel unduly apprehensive about these tendencies, since it must be remembered that a certain proportion of all men in the services would have developed such tendencies even if there had been no war to free them from restraint.

More frequent, and less serious from the social standpoint, are those attitudes and tendencies which evidence the presence of an underlying neurosis. These find their principal roots in fear of the future. Not yet fully adjusted to the modern world of competition, or frequently suffering from some more or less serious maladjustment, these men have been "shocked" into illness by experiences they have undergone, and their feelings of illness have created a sense of deep inadequacy. This sense may manifest itself in a desire to remain indefinitely in a Government hospital

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or to bring pressure for an increased pension. Not infrequently it finds expression in a constant pre-occupation with minor bodily discomforts and disabilities, or in exaggerating the disabling features of some injury or illness.

There is often noticeable a certain inertia, a disinclination to face the effort of getting out, of seeking employment, of joining in activities of various sorts. Such a mildly depressive attitude is not infrequently complicated by excessive drinking, which in turn helps to perpetuate the depressed reaction.

Next to fear of the future an increased wish for mastery over others may be discernible. This is often expressed as a feeling of having been "put back," "disappointed," "not having had a good break," or as a sense of grievance at finding civilians earning big wages and driving around in automobiles. Many men want a chance to "get in the big money." The lack of opportunity for distinction in the army and the disabilities which these men have suffered may have induced a vindictive, hostile attitude which makes them the potential allies of pressure groups and subversive minorities. Tales of strikes and of fabulous wages are employed as rationalizations of these attitudes. No plan offered them by public or private agencies is good enough for them, no pension adequate to their just deserts, no job suited to their needs or capacities.

Perhaps one of the most striking, and to many people surprising symptoms of war neurosis is an unreasoning distrust of self, expressed in feelings of guilt. In almost all combat neurosis cases this is a striking feature. The patient feels that he has let his buddies down by getting sick, or even by getting injured. He may even protest that he was responsible for another man's death because he was not given the particular assignment which ended in his comrade being killed. He feels that he has shown that he has not got "what it takes."

It has been found that reactions of this type can often be successfully and quickly cleared up if treatment is initiated at once, and the man kept in contact with men of his own command. The group morale which is so characteristic of a well-organized unit is one of the chief factors in getting men well. Removal from his

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group and restoration to the status of the despised civilian is often an extremely difficult hurdle for a disabled man to take.

Such then are the problems which disabled men face upon their return, over and above those specifically related to some physical or functional injury. For these more special disabilities the resources of the service hospitals will make ample provision. But what of those more subtle ailments which represent some degree of partial disorganization of the psychobiological entity which we call the returning soldier, and which may show themselves as a persistent bodily complaint, without organic disease; as one of the disturbed types of attitude or feeling above described; or as a more acute anxiety state, with attacks of panic, tenseness, restlessness, insomnia, nightmares, sweating, trembling at the slightest unexpected noise, and other complications? What are to be the sources of effective help for these sufferers, and what are to be the techniques for applying this help?

The first job of the community, and of those individuals and agencies charged with responsibility for meeting this challenge, is to create for the returning soldier an environment in which he feels that his needs are understood and that plans are already made to meet them. Separation from comrades, illness, loss of a regimented programme, must inevitably combine to induce a state of uncertainty and apprehension. He will need help in the process of effecting a new identification with the civilian community. It will not be the same as it was, for war has brought changes at home as well as on the scenes of combat. He will not be the same as he was before he was placed in uniform. His experiences may have matured him, so that the old opportunities at home and even his old family life will have lost their savor. A survey recently made shows that about 40% of returning soldiers have not returned to their former homes. What better indication could there be that they too want a new deal?

Parents, wives, ministers, physicians, school teachers and others should all be well posted about the community resources available for the rehabilitation of the returning service man, and about his basic needs. Already at the Veterans' Service Centre in New York relatives are finding the answers to some of their un-

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certainties. This is an encouraging development. At Baltimore in May of this year the Federal Council of Churches sponsored a two-day National Conference on the ministry of the church to returning service men and women.

In many families, nonetheless, selfishness or ignorance still hold precedence over enlightenment and foresight. The veteran may be regaled with all the family troubles during his first evening at home, or he may be given an overly effusive, compulsively enthusiastic welcome, which is as embarrassing as the other is disappointing.

There are other undesirable attitudes, too, which deserve attention. Arguing over some point or on some subject which arouses antagonism should be avoided at all costs. No effort should be made to worm out detailed reminiscences, beyond the point where the soldier is ready to volunteer them. It is unwise to treat a statement of grievances or complaints with uncritical sympathy, since such attitudes are not infrequently evidences of a maladjustment in which he needs help. Every effort should be made to avoid the betrayal of strong emotions through facial expression, sudden ejaculations of horror, surprise, or shock, and attitudes dramatized to meet the situation. Above all, the temptation to make a diagnosis of his trouble, to make such remarks as, "The trouble with you is . . . ," or to jump to conclusions about what is wrong with what a doctor has told him, should be rigorously suppressed.

The welcome should be warm and natural. The veteran should be made to feel that once again he is back where he belongs, where he is wanted, and where in due time he too has a job to do. When the first flush of excitement over his return has subsided and he has had the chance to say everything that he wants to say, the family team should tell him just what they know of the resources available to complete his rehabilitation, and should help him to become acquainted with them without delay. The sooner some plan is outlined and started the less will be the chance that his disability may prove resistant to therapy.

Once the plan is under way every effort should be made to help him back into the group settings in which he normally belongs,

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or those in which he will secure the advantages of social contact and recreation. The clergy, the medical profession and social agencies, both governmental and private, stand ready to assist in the task. He may want to see his old friends or to make new ones. At any rate, he should be encouraged to get into circulation again. If he offers an unexpected resistance to any or all of these efforts on his behalf, it is fair to assume that he needs specialized help.

Above all, a victim of some form of nervous or emotional illness should be given the same consideration as a returning soldier with a physical disfigurement or an organic illness. Indeed, it must be emphasized that individuals who cannot show an obvious physical cause for their discharge are more in need of understanding and recognition than those who can. Their chances of a future limited by disability may be just as great as those of men who have lost an eye, an arm, or a leg.

Let us not turn away from the fact that it was our own inertia, our own unwillingness to accept the full implications of events, or to listen to those who knew their significance, which was responsible for so large a part of this suffering. Let us be sure that no stone is left unturned to give those who return that measure of security which is their just reward for fighting our battles, and for giving us the chance to work with them toward more realistic conceptions of the world as it is and of aims to be pursued in the betterment of international relations.

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The Jews—A Problem That Cannot Wait

Robert Gordis

I

HISTORY shows that the liquidation of an entire people is completely feasible and leads to no undesirable results, if the extermination is complete and no survivors are permitted to escape." This quotation does not emanate from an institution for the criminal insane. It is a powerful modern state's cold-blooded statement of official policy that has been systematically put into practice. Since the outbreak of the war, the Nazis have slaughtered two million Jewish men, women and children, and the number is rising even now.

In the face of this unparalleled campaign of murder, the United Nations have done little. A few statements of sympathy have been voiced by public officials, not too many. Two conferences on refugees have been held: one in 1938 at Evian (spelled backwards it reads "naive") and another in 1943 at Bermuda, which announced in advance that it would be merely "exploratory in character."

The one concrete act by Great Britain has been the enforcement on April 1, 1944, of the White Paper on Palestine, which Winston Churchill himself declared in 1939 "a betrayal of British honor," and which the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations rejected as "not in conformity with the Mandate." By its provisions, the doors of Palestine are permanently closed

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to Jewish immigration, and land purchases by Jews are forbidden — all this in fulfillment of the Balfour Declaration, and in the darkest hour of Jewish need!

The blow was softened by the announcement that some 30,000 immigration certificates that had not been utilized during the past five years would be made available before the shutting of the gates.

Until President Roosevelt's statement to Zionist leaders in March 1944 that "The American Government has never given its approval to the White Paper of 1939," our own government remained silent. It did, however, set up a War Refugee Board, which is seeking to grapple realistically with the problem. The WRB suggested the establishment of "free ports" where refugees could be admitted temporarily. One such port is now in existence at Oswego, New York. However, even if this were to become a general practice, the ultimate disposition of the refugees involved would still be uncertain. Moreover, the same problem must be solved for those fortunate refugees who have found temporary sanctuary in Switzerland, Sweden and Spain, because of "the danger of anti-Semitic contagion in countries which formerly scarcely knew it." (AJYB, 1943, p. 288, citing *Basler Nachrichten*)[1]

There is, of course, one obvious answer to the problem of Jewish homelessness. When Nazism is destroyed, Jewish refugees, like all others, should be encouraged to return to their former homes. But while their right of domicile is theoretically incontestable, and must be defended, a realistic approach must reckon with the fact that the evil of Hitler's doing will live long after him. The desolation which will be postwar Europe offers little hope for the uprooted Jews who survive Hitler's campaign of extermination. A starving peasantry, a penniless middle-class, a proletariat without means of subsistence, will scarcely take

[1] For lack of space it has not been possible to include a full documentation for this paper. A word is in order, however, on the sources which are cited by name. "The American Jewish Year-Book" (AJYB), is the authoritative annual on Jewish affairs, published by the American Jewish Committee, a civic-defense agency, non-Zionist in viewpoint. The Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) is a world-wide welfare and relief agency, non-partisan in character, generally regarded as non-Zionist in orientation. The Brookings Institution survey of San Domingo was financed by a grant of the Falk Foundation, which was largely instrumental in launching the colonization project. In every instance, the most reliable sources have been utilized.

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kindly to the thought that they make room for returning Jews in their pinched economy, which will largely be dependent upon foreign bounty. When men lack for animal needs, the animal takes precedence over the man.

This problem will be acute, not only in traditionally anti-Semitic lands like Poland and Rumania, but even in lands like Czechoslovakia, Greece and Italy, where Jews enjoyed a high measure of equality before the war. One of the truest democrats of our time, President Benes of Czechoslovakia, has stated officially that the repatriation of deported Czechoslovakian Jews after the war "will confront the regime with a difficulty."

Day by day it becomes clearer that room must be found elsewhere, and speedily, for tremendous numbers of European Jews.

II

The quest for centers of Jewish emigration has been one of the perpetual preoccupations of philanthropists since the days of Baron de Hirsch. With the growth of Jewish misery, since the rise of Nazism, the tempo of the search has been sharply increased. Yet all in all, it remains a tale of extraordinary effort, heart-rending sacrifice and infinitesimal results.

Perhaps the most ambitious undertaking was the proposed establishment of Biro-Bidjan, a district in Siberia, as a Jewish autonomous territory within the Soviet Union. Yet the project did not prosper, and virtually no foreign Jews have found refuge there.

Naturally, the Western Hemisphere seemed to offer opportunities for large-scale emigration, which could help populate and industrialize backward areas. The most widely publicized effort was the colonization project in San Domingo, the only practical consequence of the Evian conference. Following the announcement by Generalissimo Rafael L. Trujillo that his country was prepared to accept up to 100,000 refugees, a colony was established at Sosua by the Dominican Republic Settlement Association (DORSA).

The results of the project have now been exhaustively surveyed by a commission of experts of the Brookings Institution, headed

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by Professor Dana G. Munro of Princeton University. According to their painstaking and detailed volume, *Refugee Settlement in the Dominican Republic* (Washington, 1942), DORSA had spent $640,000 on the equipment and administration of the colony and the transportation of colonists by July 1, 1941. Yet the total number settled in the colony on June 30, 1942, a year later, was only 472.

The cost is the least difficulty. The jungles that surround the colony breed disease and make it very hard for white men to survive. The survey found, too, considerable evidence "not only of racial mixture, but usually of the least desirable character" (p. 45). The considered judgment of the commission is that "it would be inadvisable to attempt any rapid expansion of the settlement under present conditions" (p. 341). Stripped of the cautious phraseology of the expert, this means that the project cannot be seriously regarded as a practical solution to the problem.

Another tragic case in point is afforded by Bolivia. While several thousand refugees succeeded in going elsewhere, some 10,000 are living there under conditions of indescribable difficulty. The Joint Distribution Committee, which has spent over $163,800 on these refugees, states categorically that Bolivia is "climatically, industrially and agriculturally not favorable," and that living at extremely high altitudes has "seriously affected the health" of the hapless refugees (Report AJJDC, 1940–41, p. 33).

It is estimated that some 100–120,000 refugees have been absorbed in all of Central and South America. Unfortunately, their presence "has accelerated the anti-immigration trend which has been current throughout Latin America" (AJYB 1942, p. 89; 1943, p. 34). Argentina, Paraguay and Chile now demand passports from "the land of origin" of the would-be immigrant, which automatically bars all victims of Nazism, and Cuba and Mexico have adopted similar restrictive measures. It is clear that Latin America has taken in virtually all the refugees it is prepared to accept, incidentally creating the threat of a new anti-Semitic agitation in the Western Hemisphere.

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III

Whatever else may be suggested, no program for the amelioration of the Jewish lot is even faintly realistic, unless it includes that one center that has thus far not appeared in our discussion: Palestine. That problems exist here, as in any other field of human activity, goes without saying. But I believe that an unbiased appraisal of the situation will lead to the recognition that Palestine is a fundamental element in any genuine solution of the Jewish problem. Let us consider the objections *seriatim*.

Palestine is too small to accommodate any large number of refugees. Palestine *is* a small country, made artificially smaller by the British Government's cutting off Transjordania in 1922 and sealing it against all Jewish immigration, the beginning of a process that has culminated in the White Paper of 1939. But the absorptive capacity of a land is a dynamic, not a static condition, depending not only on economic factors, but also upon the psychological attitudes of the population. Suffice it to say that from 1933 to 1941, some 225,000 Jewish refugees entered the land (AJYB, 1943–44, p. 600), bringing the total Jewish population to 600,000.

In the face of these facts, the objection shifts its ground. *Palestine has already admitted refugees to the limit of its absorptive capacity*. This contention is no more valid than the first. Today, the 600,000 Jews in Palestine are ready and willing to make room for many thousands more men, women and children. There is a great need for more manpower in industry and agriculture in Palestine, which has become both an arsenal and a granary of the United Nations.

Josephus puts the inhabitants of Palestine in the Roman period at five or six millions, which is about the consensus of modern scholars in their estimate of the ancient population. Dr. Walter G. Lowdermilk of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, in *Palestine, Land of Promise*, finds that four million more refugees can be settled in the land through a project like the Jordan River Authority. The limitless possibilities of urban and industrial settlement are illustrated by the growth of Tel Aviv to a population of 200,000, living on what was formerly empty sand dunes. But

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even agriculturally the opportunities are great. Jews now occupy only one and a half million dunams of land, less than one-seventeenth of the area of Western Palestine. The Arabs cultivate some seven million dunams. More than eighteen million dunams are wasteland that Jewish energy, labor and capital could reclaim for settlement.

The basic obstacle to enlarged refugee settlement in Palestine is the long-standing official attitude of the British Government, which is now resolutely pressing forward with the enforcement of the White Paper. Appeasement dies hard, and hardest of all in the East!

IV

As always, the advocates of appeasement appear as apostles of sweet reasonableness. The official attitude, which is being zealously propagated, is that *Jewish progress in Palestine has aroused the antagonism of the Arabs, a) because it injures their position, and b) because it jeopardizes their aspirations.* The British colonial administration is therefore made to appear before the world as an honest mediator, helpless between two violent antagonists.

Two observations shed light on the justice of this claim. The English people itself has not been so easily persuaded. The British Labor Party has officially gone on record that when it comes to power, it will not be bound by the White Paper, but will strive to create a Jewish majority in Palestine. Besides, the picture of Palestine here painted, bears an all too striking resemblance to the British position in India. The analogy should lead to a careful scrutiny of the three arguments advanced against a democratic Jewish commonwealth in Palestine.

Without minimizing the gravity of the situation, it may be stated that the antagonism of the Arabs toward Jewish immigration and progress in Palestine is in part imaginary, and in part capable of mitigation. The spearhead of the anti-Zionist agitation is the so-called "Arab national movement." But this is merely a handsome name for a loose group of tiny, mutually hostile political groups, recruited from the land-owning class and their

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retainers, the officials and the tiny professional groups. Their combined membership has rarely gone above a few hundred, and a careful student states that the committees are generally identical with the entire membership! The full story of the machinations, assassinations and intrigues of the so-called Arab nationalists cannot be detailed here. The vast majority of the Arabs in Palestine have at no time taken part in the agitation and the reign of terror created by the "nationalists." Thus, in order to whip up religious fanaticism during the riots, agitators showed the Arab peasants a photograph of Zionist leaders dedicating the Jewish National Fund Building in Jerusalem and explained that these were Jews seizing the Mosque of Omar!

The motive power of the riots came from the Arab feudal landlords, or *effendis*, who were making a desperate and bloody attempt to halt the march of progress in Palestine. The establishment of a forward-looking, advanced community was threatening the age-old exploitation of the Arab peasant by the *effendi*, who was both landlord and usurer. According to the *money-lending* system in vogue since Turkish days, called *asharah-chameshtash*, the money-lender receives fifteen units of the harvest for every ten loaned the peasant. Depending on the number of months, the interest rate varies from 25 to 100%. The government estimates that a peasant surrenders 20–25% of his entire income to the usurer, even if the land belongs to the peasant. But absentee landlords, Ruppin estimates, own about 80% of the land in Galilee, about 50% in southern Palestine and about 85% in Transjordania, so that the peasant surrenders even more of his income to the *effendi*. Modern social and economic standards introduced by the Jewish community are bound to destroy the feudal system. Beginning with 1929, therefore, when large-scale Jewish immigration began, the *effendi* class has sought desperately to halt the tide, through a series of riots.

With the rise of Italian Fascism and German Nazism, both eager to fish in troubled waters, the agitators, headed by the Mufti Haj el Husseini, found congenial allies and supporters. Again and again, the Jews pointed out that the Mufti and his gangsters were receiving funds, ammunition and the benefits of

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radio propaganda from Berlin and Rome. But the British administration policy in Palestine was compounded of weakness and blindness, with a strong dash of appeasement tactics. The riots were allowed to continue with little effective effort to re-establish law and order. Perhaps the theory was that a little trouble was a good thing — it would prove that Jews and Arabs could not get along without the British! Only when the riots became a minor war, and threatened the British position, were they brought under control. Today, the Mufti is in Berlin, broadcasting for Hitler and acting as his advisor on Near Eastern affairs. The extremely small number of Arab volunteers in the British armed forces testifies to the effectiveness of Axis propaganda through the years.

The elimination of the terrorists since the outbreak of the war has permitted incipient normal relations to develop between Jews and Arabs and to emphasize the basic community of interest linking the two groups in defense, agriculture, industry and labor. Yet the devastating judgment of Henrietta Szold still stands: "The British Government never attempted to do a solitary thing to bring about cooperation between the two races." Were an honest effort of this sort made, the masses of Arabs would soon be convinced of the beneficial effects upon their lives of Jewish immigration and rebuilding; for the truth, effectively presented, is the best propaganda.

That the Arabs have been injured by Jewish achievement is the easiest claim to disprove, by any test one cares to apply. The Arab workers enjoy the benefit of several types of social legislation unknown elsewhere in the Near East, thanks to the Jewish labor and progressive movements. Jews have been active in organizing Arab labor unions for their protection. The Arabs in Palestine, even before the war, enjoyed higher living standards than in any of the nearby Arab lands. The annual consumption of goods per capita was estimated, for 1931, at 2 pounds sterling in Egypt, 3½ pounds in Syria and 4½ pounds in Arab Palestine. Ten years earlier, Arab Palestine averaged only 3 pounds. On the basis of the government census in 1931, the percentage of Arab men who were literate, was 23.1 in Palestine, 20.3 in Egypt, 18.1 in Bengal, India, and 11.3 in Asiatic Turkey. Similar improve-

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ments, pari passu with Jewish immigration, are evident in relation to the problems of working hours, infant mortality, and wages.

Nor are Jews attempting cultural imperialism. The Jewish community in Palestine represents the only non-Arab group in the world which is intensively cultivating Arabic and Moslem studies on a large scale. The Hebrew University in Jerusalem has an Institute of Arabic Studies engaged in important cultural projects in this field.

The ultimate test of the impact of Jewish immigration upon the Arab situation lies in the population trend. From 1920 to 1931 the Arab population in Palestine increased 28.6%, while in near-by Egypt the increase was only 11.1% and in Transjordan and Iraq it remained virtually stationary. The Government gives the Moslem population in 1931 as 759,700, and in 1942 as 982,-271, another increase of 29%. This is surely a remarkable way of driving the Arabs out of the country!

When these facts are brought to light, recourse is had to the final argument: that the *Zionist aspiration for a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine threatens Arab rights in the land* — political as well as economic and cultural rights. The full answer to this contention would require an analysis of the true aspirations of the Arab masses and the variety of opinion among Jews on the form the Jewish commonwealth would take. Even aside from those who favor a bi-national state, no Zionist has ever wished to expel the Arabs from Palestine or deny them all individual liberties and all group rights, including that of free cultural self-development.

Nor must sight be lost of the fact that Arab territory in the Near East, which includes Iraq, Transjordan, Syria and Egypt, has an area twenty-three times as large as Palestine. Here Arabs are at liberty to express themselves as absolute political masters as well. Is it unjust to ask the 15,000,000 Arabs in the world, who are the majority in 22/23 of the territory they occupy, to accept a minority status with adequate safeguards of their rights in 1/23, so that the 15,000,000 Jews, who are a persecuted minority everywhere, may have one corner where their culture may be free from the hazards of extinction, and that in the land in

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which they produced some of the proudest spiritual treasures of the human race?

That is the issue that must be faced by the conscience of the world, if the antagonism of Jew and Arab cannot be overcome through education and mutual adjustment. Actually Arab-Jewish rapprochement has not failed; it has scarcely been tried. But let us grant that the ideal of a democratic Jewish commonwealth in Palestine will encounter the unalterable opposition of the Arabs who are fearful of their security. In view of the peril facing the Jewish people today, with millions of lives already destroyed, realism would dictate that the doors of Palestine be opened for a few hundred thousand Jews now and that after the war the United Nations stand guard over Palestine to make sure that the Jews do not injure Arab interests. One does not refuse to face a crisis today because its solution may create some problems tomorrow.

In Palestine, the great miracle of Jewish rebuilding has benefited every group in the land. Arab antagonism, artificially stimulated and generally exaggerated, is a problem to be met, not an obstacle to thwart the historic rights and the contemporary need of the Jewish people for a homeland.

In many quarters, however, indifference and even hostility to the Zionist ideal derive from a general opposition to nationalism, which has reached its ultimate degradation in Fascism. It is said that there are too many nations already and that the creation of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine is a step in the wrong direction. But to demand the disintegration of the Jewish people, which has shown such sacrificial will to survive through the centuries, while taking no steps to dissolve the scores of aggressive nationalisms rampant in the world today, is the height of cynicism or naïvete.

What is more, all evidence points to the heightening of national loyalties rather than their disappearance. We may cite the new nations created by the Versailles Treaty and in the Soviet Union, as well as the emergent national consciousness among the darker races of Asia and Africa. If civilization is not to be destroyed, men's energies must be directed to the moralization,

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not the elimination, of national loyalties. The prophets of Israel began that process by proclaiming that national loyalty implies a sense of obligation to the world. This conception of nationalism as a cultural and moral force has always remained alive in the Jewish people, and Zionism is only its latest manifestation.

The path of progress and peace for mankind lies not in decrying nationalism and cursing its crimes, but rather in imbuing it with ethical responsibility. The goal has been expressed admirably by Santayana: "A man must stand with his feet firmly planted in his own country, but his eyes must survey the world." More recently, the Soviet writer, Ilya Ehrenburg, has pointedly remarked, "National consciousness is in the air in our time. The cosmopolitanism of the nineteenth century is a thing of the past . . . . But this is no retrogression. For how can one love humanity and not love one's own people?"

Zionism deserves the allegiance of every lover of freedom. Whatever our ultimate picture of world society, Palestine is an essential element in meeting the immediate problem of the defenselessness of the Jew and the enduring issue of the homelessness of his culture.

It goes without saying that the deep concern of most American Jews with Palestine does not in the slightest impair their devotion to America. They recognize only one political allegiance — to the United States — to which they have borne witness in war and peace since the Revolutionary War. Loyalty to the rebuilding of the Jewish homeland and sturdy American patriotism are not mutually exclusive. They strengthen and re-enforce each other. Catholics loyal to their world faith or Irish-Americans with cultural and sentimental ties to Eire have had a parallel experience.

The effort to come to grips with the Jewish problem has inevitably brought us into deep waters, for the destiny of Israel is intimately bound up with the roots of our civilization. The immediate abrogation of the White Paper, the opening of the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration, and the ultimate establishment of a democratic Jewish commonwealth in Palestine, are essential steps in righting an ancient and festering wrong. More than that Jews do not ask. Less, a just society cannot grant.

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Dauntless the Slug-Horn

Robert A. Hume

Let it be told how Childe Roland Jones,
Corporal, U. S. A., cozy with furlough,
Hunched himself at night in a roachy joint
Off Thompson Street consuming seven beers
As the warmths of alcohol and quietness,
Rubbing against him tiger-furred, stroked,
And then seduced him (nor did he resist);
How sitting there he suddenly was sure
Of a bright indwelling natural ecstasy
Rendering translucent earthly things,
And in his high conviction was a god
Rejoicing at the wooden chair before him
Over which eternity had shrunk,
Infinity had narrowed, and the world
Wheeled greatly, delicately, tenderly,
Until at length the universe itself
Fell rushingly to be there, only there,
Forever, in that paintless wooden chair.

Let it be told how marvel spread in him
The more he watched, until it reached his lips:
As swift (he cried), as untranscribable
As Light, within whose radiance Dante stood,
May not my vision, too, be named divine?
This power; beauty; truth are God's — and mine!

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Let it be spoken, then, how modestly
He turned to re-create our damaged world,
Proving at once the fitness of his wisdom
By granting each inseparable atom glory
Not to be denied, while Jones as God
Demanded only common privilege,
Though knowing, as a man turned god, just why
He wished to live, but might consent to die.

Let it, I say, be told: for Corporal Jones,
Clumping radiant into the windy night,
Leaving the tavern behind, did not contrive
At once to indite this revelation
Shining (he felt) on the waters, the earth, the sky.
Perhaps his vision was man's sombre blood
Leaving, at last, its ancient murderous dream,
Seeking, at last, quick brotherhood with light;
Perhaps it was but soldier's drunkenness.
But standing in Africa last month, alone
By Jones's grave, I thought: Let it be known.

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The Beard of Joseph Palmer

Stewart Holbrook

ONE of the unsung but really great individualists who helped to make the United States a better and a safer place to live in was Joseph Palmer of Fitchburg and Harvard, Massachusetts, a man to be reckoned with in any discussion of the Bill of Rights. He is forgotten now, and this is bad forgetting, for Palmer was of a race of men that is now all but extinct. And his story, I think, is as heart-warming as it is improbable.

Palmer came to national attention because he was the victim of one of the strangest persecutions in history. Neither race nor religion played a part in Palmer's case, which with some reason might otherwise be termed *l'affaire Dreyfus* of Fitchburg. It was brought about by the fact that Joe Palmer liked to wear a beard, one of the most magnificent growths ever seen in New England or, for that matter, in the United States; and what made this beard particularly heinous was that it was almost if not quite the only beard east of the Rocky Mountains, and possibly beyond.

One lone set of whiskers amid millions of smooth-shaven faces is something to contemplate, and Palmer paid dearly for his eccentricity. Indeed, one might say, with but little stretch of imagination and metaphor, that it was Joe Palmer who carried the Knowledge of Whiskers through the dark ages of beardless America. He was born almost a century too late and seventy-five years too soon to wear whiskers with impunity. He was forty-two years old in 1830, when he moved from his nearby farm into the hustling village of Fitchburg. He came of sturdy old Yankee stock. His father had served in the Revolution, and Joe himself

© Author and journalist, STEWART HOLBROOK makes his second appearance this year in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. (His article, "The Peshtigo Fire," was published in the Spring 1944 issue.) Mr. Holbrook edited the daily column "Books and Things" in *The New York Herald Tribune* during the month of July.

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had carried a musket in 1812. He was married and had one son, Thomas.

When the beard first made its appearance isn't of record, but Joe was wearing it when he came to Fitchburg, and here, because of it, he immediately became the butt of cruel jokes and derision and, in time, the victim of downright persecution. But before relating the violence caused by Palmer's famous beard, it is imperative — if one is to comprehend the proceedings at all — to trace briefly the history of whiskers in America up to the time of the Palmer beard.

This continent was explored by men of many nationalities, almost all of them wearing whiskers. About Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci we are uncertain, since there are no authenticated contemporary portraits of them. But after them came a host of beards. Cortes, Ponce de Leon, Cartier, Champlain, Drake, Raleigh, Captain John Smith, De Soto — all sported whiskers of varying length and style. Little wonder the Indians thought them gods.

Then came the Pilgrims and the Puritans, bearded almost to a man when they arrived at The Rock and elsewhere. But the beards of the first settlers didn't last. American whiskers were reduced gradually in size until they were scarcely more than mild goatees, and soon disappeared entirely. By 1720 at the latest, American colonists were wholly free of facial hair. Try to find a Copley portrait, or a Ralph Earle, with a whisker in it. And the fighting men of the Revolution were beardless. Not a moustache or a suspicion of a mutton-chop appeared on the faces of Washington, Gates, Greene, Knox. Even old John Stark and Israel Putnam were smooth-shaven, and so was the backwoods general, Ethan Allen. It was the same with the other Patriots, and with the British also — Cornwallis, the Howes, Burgoyne. No signer of the Declaration had either beard or moustache.

And so it continued down the years. No President before Lincoln had any hair on his face. Until 1858 the cartoonists' conception of their own creature, Uncle Sam — otherwise much as he is today — was of a tall and lanky but smooth-shaven man. America did not really go hairy until the Civil War was well under way.

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Thus when Joe Palmer came to town wearing a beard in 1830, whiskers had been virtually non-existent for at least a hundred years. In spite of his hirsute oddity Palmer was an honest, kindly man and a good citizen, deeply religious but tolerant, and a man of many intellectual interests. He was also quite immovable when it came to principles, which in his case included the right to wear a full flowing beard.

Everywhere he went small boys threw stones and shouted "Old Jew Palmer," and made life miserable for his son Tom. Women sniffed and crossed to the other side of the street when they saw him coming. Often the windows of his modest home were broken by unknown rowdies. Grown men jeered at him openly. The Reverend George Trask, local pastor, took him to task for his eccentricity, but Joe replied with exact Scriptural reasons — nay, commands — for beard-wearing. Old Doctor Williams told Joe to his face that he should "be prosecuted for wearing such a monstrosity." And when Joe went to Boston to attend literary and reform meetings, huge crowds "followed him the length of Tremont Street, jeering." He was present at the celebrated Chardon Street Convention in 1840, and one has no difficulty locating him in Emerson's comment on that gathering:

> If the assembly was disorderly, it was picturesque. Madmen, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-Day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians, and Philosophers — all came successively to the top, and seized their moment, if not their hour, wherein to chide, or pray, or preach, or protest. (Works, X: 352)

By the time of this Convention, Joe Palmer was a national character, made so by two events that had happened in quick succession in his home town of Fitchburg. In spite of the snubs of the congregation, Joe never missed a church service, but one Sunday he quite justifiably lost his usually serene temper. It was a Communion Sunday in 1830. Joe knelt with the rest, only to be publicly humiliated when the officiating clergyman ignored him, "passed him by with the communion bread and wine." Joe was cut to the quick. He rose up and strode to the communion table. He lifted the cup to his lips and took a mighty swig. Then:

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"I love my Jesus," he shouted in a voice loud with hurt and anger, "as well, and better, than any of you!" Then he went home.

A few days later, as he was coming out of the Fitchburg Hotel, he was seized by four men armed with shears, brush, soap and razor. They told him that the sentiment of the town was that his beard should come off and they were going to do the job there and then. When Joe started to struggle, the four men threw him violently to the ground, seriously injuring his back and head. But Joe had just begun to fight. When they were about to apply the shears, he managed to get an old jack-knife out of his pocket. He laid about him wildly, cutting two of his assailants in their legs, not seriously but sufficiently to discourage any barber work. When Joe stood up, hurt and bleeding, his gorgeous beard was intact.

Presently he was arrested, charged with "an unprovoked assault." Fined by Justice Brigham, he refused to pay. Matter of principle, he said. He was put in the city jail at Worcester and there he remained for more than a year, part of the time in solitary confinement. Even here he had to fight for his whiskers, for once Jailor Bellows came with several men with the idea of removing the now famous beard. Joe threw himself at them and fought so furiously that the mob retreated without a hair. He also successfully repulsed at least two attempts by prisoners to shave him.

In the jail Joe wrote letters which he smuggled out a window to his son, who took them to the *Worcester Spy*. They were published and soon were being widely copied by other newspapers. In his letters the bearded prisoner stated that he was in jail not for assault but because he chose to wear whiskers — which was unquestionably the case. He complained of the food, of the quarters, and of the lack of any religious life behind the bars. People all over Massachusetts read these letters. They began to talk, and even to reflect. It wasn't long before the sheriff came to realize that he had a Tartar and possibly a martyr on his hands. He went to Joe and told him to run along home and forget it — the fine and everything. No, said Joe. The jailor urged him to leave. His aged mother wrote him to come home. All in vain. Nothing

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could move the man who was now known as The Bearded Prisoner of Worcester.

Day after day he sat in his limbo, keeping an elaborate and pathetic journal of his persecutions. And time after time he told officers and worried magistrates that they had put him there, and they would have to take him out. "I won't walk one single step toward freedom!" he roared through the bars. Nor did he. He sat there in a chair like a whiskered Buddha until the desperate sheriff and jailors picked him up in his chair and carried him to the street.

II

Never again was violence attempted on Joe Palmer's beard, which by the time of his release, or rather his eviction, from jail, was a beard famous as far away as New York and Philadelphia. Free now, he soon became a minor figure in New England's intellectual ferment. A hater of slavery, he went to Boston often for the meetings of Parker and Garrison, contributing both time and money to the movement for Abolition. He met Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, Channing, and these men found him an odd but staunch character, the possessor of much good sense. He loathed liquor as much as he did slavery and was active at Temperance meetings. He visited the communities at Brook Farm and Hopedale.

When Bronson Alcott and family, with Charles Lane and a few others, bought a farm in Harvard, near Fitchburg, named it Fruitlands and attempted to found the Con-Sociate Family, Joe Palmer was vastly interested. He donated a lot of fine old furniture and up-to-date farm implements to the colony. When he saw that Alcott's idiotic ideas about farming were going to bring famine to the group, he brought his own team and plow and turned up the soil. He was, in fact, the only sensible male in that wondrous experiment. (Joe Palmer appears in Louisa May Alcott's *Transcendental Wild Oats* as Moses White.)

Fruitlands had the distinction of being the worst-managed and shortest-lived of all American colonies. When the half-starved Alcotts and the others had moved away, Joe Palmer bought the

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farm and moved there with his wife and family. Here for more than twenty years he carried on a strange sort of community life of his own devising. He was widely known now and never lacked for company. Emerson and Thoreau visited him, and so did every reformer who passed through or operated in New England. The merely curious came to see the famous beard. The Palmers always had a pot of beans on the stove, plenty of bread in the butt'ry. All were welcome to come and to stay, so long as they had no trace of liquor about them.

In place of persecution, Joe now found himself something of a hero. The years crept on and with them his great beard grew even more famously, spreading like a willow. A photograph taken at about this time shows a growth that makes Walt Whitman seem a beardless youth in comparison. And at last, many years before he died, the whiskers of all America came into their fullest glory. This Second Coming of the beard was sudden, an almost instantaneous wilderness of hair that covered the face of male America.

One cannot know with certainty the reason for this sudden era of whiskers; it can only be recorded. Lincoln, when elected, was smooth-shaven, but when inaugurated wore a beard. Grant, the lieutenant, had worn a tiny moustache; Grant, the general, had a full beard. Robert E. Lee went smooth of face to war, and was presently full-bearded. In 1860 Jeff Davis was clean of chin. He was soon wearing whiskers longer than Lincoln's. Nearly all of the generals of the Civil War, on both sides, were peering out of whiskers by 1862, and so were their men. Stonewall Jackson grew a mighty beard. Custer grew a unique combination beard and moustache, but it was General Ambrose E. Burnside who gave his name to a special type of whiskers.

The baseball players of the Sixties and Seventies, as depicted by the careful Currier & Ives, had whiskers. Bankers grew a style all their own. Razors went into the discard and vendors of quack beard-growers swarmed into the new market. The proper gift to a male was an elegant moustache cup. Manufacturers of soap, patent medicines, and cough drops — notably cough drops — came out with one or more bearded faces on their labels. Whiskers, through some odd turn of the folkways, now were a sign of solid

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worth, a badge of integrity in every line of endeavor. If the poor barbers thought the end of things had arrived, it is easy to understand why.

As for old Joe Palmer, he was immensely happy, a true prophet who had lived to see his justification. Few prophets have been so fortunate. All over America, Joe Palmer knew, were now full beards, Van Dykes, goatees, galways, dundrearys, mutton-chops, burnsides, fringe beards, and millions of stupendous moustaches of the over-Niagara type. Aye, the prophet had come into his own. Yet Joe was no gloater. He seems to have remarked only once on the greatly changed styles of what men wore on their faces. That was when he met the same Reverend Trask who had so churlishly upbraided him many years before for wearing his beard. Trask himself was now wearing a luxuriant growth. Meeting him on a Fitchburg street one day, Joe stroked his own beard and remarked: "Knowest thou that thy redeemer liveth?"

III

Joe Palmer died in 1875 when beards were at their fullest, and was thus spared the dreadful sight of their withering and final disappearance. What happened during the thirty-five years following Joe's death would certainly have saddened him.

The whisker debacle of the last quarter of the nineteenth century has engrossed only a few of us minor social historians, but Mr. Lewis Gannett has charted the decline so graphically that little more research needs to be done. He used his alma mater, Harvard University, to demonstrate the mysterious rises and falls of male American hair; and his studies show that graduating classes of the 1860's were hairy as goats. The Class of 1870 had four beards. Two years later a good majority were wearing not beards but moustaches and burnsides. By 1890 beards and burnsides (sideburns are the same thing, only there isn't quite so much to them) were distinctly obsolete, and the moustache was at or nearing its peak.

Decline now followed with tragic speed. The Class of 1900 was without one beard, the first such crowd of sissies since the Mexican War. The last Harvard football moustache appeared in 1901,

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Mr. Gannett's chart shows, and the last Harvard baseball moustache in 1905. Since then Harvard men — except for a few professors — have been mostly smooth of chin and lip.

The White House witnessed a similar decline of hair. From Lincoln to Wilson only one man without at least a moustache was elected to the Presidency. Grant had a beard, Hayes was positively hairy. Garfield fairly burgeoned with whiskers. Cleveland had a sizable moustache, Harrison a flowing beard, and both Theodore Roosevelt and Taft had moustaches. The lone smooth-shaven president during this entire period was McKinley.

Beginning with Wilson in 1912 and continuing to the present, no President has worn hair on his face. Many thought it was his beard that defeated Hughes, and his was for years the only honest beard to wag on the once heavily whiskered Supreme Court.

Old Joe Palmer, then, died at exactly the right time, and he took some pains to make certain, no matter what styles frivolous men might adopt, that he was not wholly forgotten. In the old cemetery in North Leominster, not far from Fitchburg, is his monument, a rugged square stone as tall as a man; and on its front is an excellent medallion carving of Joe's head, with its noble beard flowing and rippling in white marble. Below the head appears a simple legend: "Persecuted for Wearing the Beard."

Joe Palmer's last home, the celebrated Fruitlands in nearby Harvard, has been restored with loving care as an historical showplace by Clara Endicott Sears — not so much in memory of Palmer as of the Alcotts. In this charming house, however, one may see old Joe's beautiful furniture, and a good photograph of the kindly yet determined old gentleman who wished to be remembered only as the Redeemer of The Beard.

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A Word for the American Essay

John T. Flanagan

IF ONE needs an excuse to write about the American essay, this is it: remarkably few people have done so. There is a plenitude of books on the American short story, the novel, the drama. Studies of American verse are increasingly numerous and impressive. There is even a commendable history of the writing of history. But I know of no sound, comprehensive, readable survey of the essay in America.

Such a situation would argue the absence of any considerable body of American essays. But the reader forgets. Americans were slow to follow the literary tradition of Montaigne, whose *essais* were literally *attempts* — formless, impressionistic, subjective comments on men and life and books. Indeed nearly two centuries elapsed before Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Dennie produced sprightly, humorous essays about conduct or literature, and their models were more nearly Addison and Steele than the great Frenchman. But in its broadest denotation the essay has existed in America almost from the beginning.

Seventeenth-century American writing was intrinsically didactic and expository even when it substituted verse for prose. And it had little variety. The sermons of countless obscure divines were converted into printed prose, in which form they lost little of their original dullness. The vituperative pamphleteering of John Cotton and Roger Williams, the sober ecclesiastical histories, even the heavy satire of Nathaniel Ward (well termed the most unique scold in our literature), conform roughly to the essay type but reveal neither tolerance nor urbanity. The literary path from Increase Mather's *Essay for the Recording of Illustrious*

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Providences to the *Prejudices* of H. L. Mencken is long and circuitous.

To Cotton Mather belongs the distinction of having written the first veritable book of American essays. *Essays To Do Good*, a rare little volume which won the applause of Benjamin Franklin and inspired his early Silence Dogood papers, is a real departure from the writing of the early Puritans. Here are no tediously laudatory biographies of ministers, no accusations of witchcraft, not even the display of pedantry and scriptural learning ordinarily so relished by Mather. Instead we have in simple, forthright prose a discussion of daily conduct, rules of behavior for ministers and doctors and schoolteachers, objections to intemperance and corporal punishment, and a surprising wish for a "northwest passage" to the acquisition of Latin. Here Mather talks not as the menacing thunderer of the pulpit but as the friendly student of life and people, and his style profits.

Franklin departed even further from the flatulent rhetoric of the ministers and gradually revealed his mastery of a style far superior to anything that Mather achieved; indeed few eighteenth-century writers could equal his brevity, clearness, and wit. Even today his *bagatelles* are unparalleled, and his short, satirical essays on current politics deserve to be better known. In Revolutionary days a great many writers tried the essay form, largely for political purposes. Some, like Tom Paine, achieved instant success and lasting fame. Others, like Hamilton and Madison in the *Federalist Papers*, wrote masterly prose in working for a definite end but are today more alluded to than read. No longer either discussed or read is John Dickinson, the author of some of the clearest, most keenly analytical prose ever produced by an American.

Late in the eighteenth century another form of the essay began to appear, the sketch or disquisition given over largely to nature. Crèvecoeur added to a personal charm reminiscent of Montaigne a close scrutiny of phenomena as disparate as snakes, hummingbirds, snowstorms, and anthills, seasoning them all with a Jeffersonian antipathy to urban life and industrialism; and William Bartram, a more skilful observer of plants and flowers, wrote of

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his travels in Georgia and Florida with a philosophy touched with deism. Early in the next century Audubon interrupted the technical descriptions of his ornithological biography to insert charming vignettes of southwestern life, which ranged from Mississippi squatters and Kentucky deer hunting to scenes of bird life on the Florida keys. These early nature essays were not only far removed from the hortatory writing of the Mather period but they displayed an unprecedented warmth and concreteness.

The familiar essay in America was a similarly belated growth, despite the vogue in England of Addison and Steele. But Joseph Dennie, the lay preacher, was a not unworthy practitioner, and it is unfortunate that Dennie as the editor of the *Port Folio* put an end to Dennie as the detached and amusing spectator of literary life. Much of the best work of Washington Irving took the form of the familiar essay, and Irving, as Henry Seidel Canby pointed out, was the first American author who could boast of a genuine literary style. Irving's nostalgic, sentimental portraits of Hudson Valley life, as well as his gently satiric comments on Westminster Abbey and John Bull in the *Sketch Book*, brought the American essay to a peak which few of his countrymen have since matched.

The nineteenth century produced a spate of essay writing which the literary monthlies, especially after the Civil War, encouraged and preserved. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in some ways America's greatest literary voice, was fundamentally an essayist despite his assumption of clerical garb and pontifical manner. His special gift to the essay was a brilliant allusiveness, a leavening of his thought with examples selected from many fields of learning, and a marvelous power of forging sentences so bright and keen that they reflect the light like a Damascene sword. Thoreau too had this genius, and in addition a perception of nature and a command of imagery that in such essays as "Walking" and "Autumnal Tints" almost overwhelms the reader with its richness.

Neither Emerson nor Thoreau did much with the purely critical essay, a field which Lowell shone in and which Poe made his

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special province. America has still no critics of the stature of Arnold or Sainte-Beuve, although there now is a considerable body of respectable literary analysis. But Lowell's impressionistic essays remain readable despite his tendency to wax boldest along the safest lines. Compared to his rhetorical and platitudinous verse, his appreciations of recognized authors seem almost fresh. Poe's criticism is probably the best example in world literature of a man who spun his critical theory out of and around the limitations of his own genius; nevertheless, his notions of totality and organic form retain their validity and have had a considerable effect on the evolution of the short story.

In 1857 Lowell, as the editor of the newly established *Atlantic Monthly*, invited Oliver Wendell Holmes to continue his Breakfast Table autocracies after a gap of twenty-five years, and ever since the magazine has been particularly hospitable to the essay. There the early work of John Burroughs, the observations of Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Wilson Flagg, the bookish but acute reflections of Agnes Repplier found a haven; and there the familiar essay and the nature essay flourished until the end of the century.

Indeed, if any essay form is particularly indigenous to American soil, it is the nature essay. Nurtured, as we have seen, by Crèvecoeur and Audubon, infused with philosophy and warmth by Thoreau, it reached its culmination in the work of John Burroughs, although it has been sensitively and evocatively continued by such writers as John Muir, Bradford Torrey, and Donald Culross Peattie. Burroughs alone wrote over a hundred nature essays, essays devoted chiefly to the birds and flowers and forest paths of his beloved Adirondacks. Although not conspicuously original either as an ornithologist or as a writer, he brought to his task an accuracy, a fullness of knowledge, and a simple and concrete style which no nature writer has surpassed. There is little of the poet in Burroughs and less of the humorist, but no one has done so much to interpret the songs of the birds or to transfer to paper their elusive charms. Going for a walk with John Burroughs is still an adventure, although the Sage of Slabsides has been dead for twenty years.

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Some thirty years ago Adaline May Conway published a little book on the essay which is hardly more than an annotated bibliography. But the slim text is augmented by 42 pages listing the names and work of American essayists presumably important enough to record. It is only after glancing at such an enumeration that the reader realizes the sheer bulk of the American essay. Most of these writers have fallen into neglect; many others like Henry Van Dyke and Donald G. Mitchell and George William Curtis are rapidly lapsing into that abyss from which only a revolution in literary taste can exhume them. Yet at one time they and their fellows wrote, published, and certainly had an audience. Current periodicals find it difficult to squeeze an essay in between war analyses and solemn reports on politics or economics, but in the days before Miss Conway compiled her bibliography readers had more leisure and avidly consumed the whims and fancies of the essayist. No Charles Lamb arose beneath the shadows of a mercantile house to expound in his savory prose a eulogy of chimney-sweepers or the history of pork-eating. And even less was there a Hazlitt to celebrate ambulation, or a Stevenson to point out the joys of idleness and the glory of a death in the full tide of existence. Instead Agnes Repplier spoke learnedly of books and people and charmingly of cats; Simeon Strunsky described the Belshazzar Court which he found New York to be, and Lafcadio Hearn (the strangest cosmopolite of all Americans) worshipped beauty and mystery wherever he found them, in Creole New Orleans, in Martinique, or in a Buddhist garden at the foot of Fujiyama.

The new century, moreover, produced some memorable essayists in fields ranging from science to criticism. The long series of *Shelburne Essays*, shot through with Platonic philosophy and buttressed by an ascetic classicism, brought fame and distinction to Paul Elmer More. James Gibbons Huneker, whose encyclopaedic knowledge of music and drama and painting was expressed in a style which fizzed and sputtered and exploded like a firecracker, performed an admirable service in introducing to an American audience the great *fin de siècle* Europeans. Gamaliel Bradford produced volume after volume of "psychographs,"

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shrewd, sane revaluations on psychological principles of celebrities who ranged from poets and diarists and Civil War generals to damaged souls like Aaron Burr and John Brown. H. L. Mencken no longer seems so important as he did when he was startling the readers of the youthful *American Mercury* and revealing his amazing *schimpflexicon*, but his essays on Conrad and Dreiser, not to mention some of his less violent *Prejudices*, still repay reading, and his obituary of Bryan is a masterpiece of depreciation. Stuart Sherman turned the topical book review into dignified and often admirable criticism, and Bernard DeVoto produced brilliant interpretations of Western history. The *Definitions* of Henry Seidel Canby, furthermore, show sound literary taste and a fluent style; and Van Wyck Brooks's early essays — written before, to adopt a current accusation, he fell into "scholarly story-telling" — reveal a bold and original mind knocking nineteenth-century deities off their pedestals. Even the familiar essay was not entirely neglected, as many a reader who has found pleasure in following Christopher Morley in his travels about Philadelphia will testify.

But *autres temps, autres moeurs!* Today the uncertain reception and the limited appeal of the essay have so discouraged authors that there is hardly a single writer who is first and foremost an essayist. The essay as a literary type has been subordinated to the review or to the article, and its characteristic mood of levity or casualness has been supplanted by an unbending formality. Modern readers grow a little impatient with the essay and the habit of mind of its creator. They demand facts and assertions and verities, not fanciful, half-serious speculations. The nature essay seems far removed from the battlegrounds of the Marianas and abysmally trivial when contrasted with the most recent analysis of the campaign in Normandy. And the familiar essay, despite its brilliant heritage, has been shoved aside like a plea for pacifism.

This is not to deny the occasional appearance of essays, and good ones. Sometimes, and one thinks of Zona Gale's Wisconsin sketches or Willa Cather's rare excursions into literary criticism, they are the by-products of the novelist. Ellen Glasgow has

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recently written a series of prefaces for a definitive edition of her novels in which, following the example of Henry James, she has outlined the principles which have guided her fictional art. Again, in the hands of a critic like Edmund Wilson, the essay serves as the vehicle for forthright and serious appraisal. With Stuart Chase the essay has become the medium for discussions of society and economic planning, while William Beebe has found it serviceable to explain oceanography and marine life to a lay audience. Probably the most original talent among the modern essayists is that of E. B. White, whose trenchancy and wit sharpened by long experience as a paragrapher for a sophisticated weekly have delighted scores of readers. But unfortunately Mr. White has been unable to resist the lure of a Maine farm, and his clear, fresh voice is temporarily silent.

Indeed the deflection of the essay from its time-honored channels has been so obvious and so annoying that James Norman Hall has recently felt compelled to write a justification of the form. Despite the welter of articles and syndicated columns and editorials, he points out, "the essayists have, or should have, an honored place, standing-room at least, in the midst of any body politic that considers itself civilized." In the midst of wars and social upheavals they hold fast to urbanity and have proved themselves benefactors of mankind. Dr. Johnson's churlish definition of the essay as a "loose sally of the mind" merely reveals another of his many, deep-rooted prejudices.

In those halcyon days which we all anticipate "after the war," it is probable that the pithy reporting, the fact-studded analyses, the ubiquitous personal-experience narratives (but don't start me on that, says John Marquand's Walter Newcombe) will become a little tedious. Military strategy and official reports will accrue to the historians whom present censorship restrictions leave foaming at the mouth. And men deafened by the roar of Stukas and weary of the glitter of the Italian sun will again be interested in the call of the hermit thrush. After the blatancy, the terrible familiarity of war, even the gentle egoism of the essayist will resume its appeal, while the dogmatism of the critic will once again seem significant.

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For the essay can no more die than the ballad and the tale. Granted that it has its period of eclipse. Granted that readers forget its long history and scorn the many tomes on library shelves. So long as the essay reveals personality and so long as there is personality to reveal, the form will be with us; and will demand the best wit and learning and scholarship and wisdom that the human race can muster.

In the Winter Issue . . . .

DANTE'S OWN COMEDY

by Jefferson B. Fletcher

The crystallization of a lifetime of study by the dean of Dante scholars.

THE IGNORANCE OF THE EDUCATED

by DeLancey Ferguson

A merciless anatomy of the limitations of being "educated."

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE OLD MAN

by Paul Wolfe

A delightful record of the casually profound conversations which Frederick J. E. Woodbridge had with some of his friends during the last years of his life.

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Man at Work

Oscar Williams

The blowtorch of mind spatters
  That mountainside, the sky,
The stars clatter brightly
  In a shower forever by.

Nothing, however, happens,
  No answer or hole torn wide,
The years pile up their fragments
  And solid remains God's side.

◎ Since the publication of the Summer 1944 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, in which OSCAR WILLIAMS' poem, "On the Couch," appeared, he has edited his fourth anthology, entitled *New Poems 1944*.

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Benedictory

Elizabeth Phillips

Our father, in the days of our precision:
Unhallowed is thy name: thy kingdom has not come.

We have eaten of the daily bread
And have tasted the wine of possession;
We have given our boasting sequence;
Still the traveling is without sentience
And there is sympathy only for the dead.

There is no time like the future.
We believe in man the father of the unmighty;
The unholy ghost; the communion of devils;
The degeneration of the body;
And the disintegration of the world.

The soldier digs his grave
And it is neither wide nor deep.
The thieves do not steal; they merely
Take that which is theirs by right or wrong.
Because we are miserable we will never be merciful.

Blessed are the poor in memory.
Blessed are the disinherited.
We have no sons and no promise of sons.
We are now human machine guns.
We move through the mob quickly.

May the Lord bless us and keep us
Until we are able to live again one with another.

© With this poem, ELIZABETH PHILLIPS contributes to a national magazine for the first time. She is a young free-lance writer from North Carolina.

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Penicillin

Jane Stafford

THE spotlight of publicity has been focussed on penicillin as a life-saving weapon against deadly bacterial infection. The facts that it comes from a mold with which everyone feels familiar and that it was discovered by accident add to the popular interest. Less widely appreciated is the significance penicillin may acquire in the future if, as now seems likely, it gives us the final push onto an entirely new line of attack in germ-fighting.

From the discovery of the role of microorganisms in causing disease up to the present time, warfare against germ diseases has followed three main lines: preventing entrance of disease germs into our bodies, building up the body's inner defenses by vaccination and similar procedures, and attacking the germs that have successfully invaded the body by chemicals extracted from plants, such as quinine, or by substances such as the sulfa drugs and arsphenamine which pharmacologists and organic chemists have compounded in their laboratories.

To many, penicillin has seemed but an extension of this chemical warfare against germs which medical scientists term chemotherapy. Penicillin's action, however, is a result of a naturally occurring antagonism between microorganisms. In taking advantage of it we are entering an era of biological warfare in which we shall turn to the biochemists for our weapons.

The germ-eat-germ antagonism that exists between some microorganisms was known long before the discovery of penicillin, and a few scientists had suggested making use of it. Some even tried to do so.

Pasteur, himself, with his associate, Joubert, as Prof. Florey

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reminds us, in 1877 described the antagonistic effect of certain contaminating organisms on the growth of the anthrax bacillus. That they appreciated the possibilities of clinical application of this antagonism is apparent from their statement, "Tous ces faits autorisent peut-être les plus grandes espérances au point de vue thérapeutique."

Thirty years before the accidental discovery of penicillin, an attempt was made to use microbial antagonism for curative purposes. In 1889, a French scientist, L. Bouchard, had discovered that the green pus-producing organism, Pseudomonas pyocyanea, was antagonistic to other species of bacteria. Following this lead, R. Emmerich and C. Loew reported in a German scientific publication that the culture medium on which Ps. pyocyanea had been growing for a long time had the property of dissolving or killing many disease-causing bacteria. They attributed this lethal effect to the action of an enzyme which they called pyocyanase and which they claimed could cure experimental anthrax. They went so far as to suggest its use for the local treatment of diphtheria and other infections. Although most scientists who subsequently studied pyocyanase questioned its clinical effectiveness, it apparently was sold in Germany as recently as 1936.

The trail led still closer to penicillin when in 1924 another substance capable of dissolving bacteria was found. This was the actinomycetin of A. Gratia and S. Dath, who found that it was produced by strains of actinomyces, which are a kind of fungi and distant relatives of the mold that produces penicillin.

Scientists in America were also investigating the possibilities of using microbial antagonism to cure disease. At Rutgers University and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Prof. Selman A. Waksman in his long and close study of microorganisms of the soil which help to provide nourishment for our food plants had been struck with the cannibalistic activity of some of them. Studying under Prof. Waksman for a time was a young scientist of French birth, Dr. René J. Dubos. Inspired, as he has said, by Prof. Waksman, Dr. Dubos set to work on the theory that all organic matter in soil is decomposed or broken down by bacteria and that disease-causing microorganisms might

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be destroyed by the same agents. In 1939, in the midst of all the excitement over the new-found sulfa drugs, Dr. Dubos and Dr. Rollin D. Hotchkiss, both then Rockefeller Institute workers, caused something of a sensation by announcing that they had isolated from soil bacilli an anti-bacterial chemical so powerful that one-millionth of an ounce would protect a mouse from a lethal dose of pneumococci. Discovery of the chemical, subsequently named gramicidin, was the result of a deliberate effort to turn the antagonism between microorganisms to mankind's advantage.

Penicillin's discovery was, by contrast, accidental, but it was one of those accidents that fortunately happen in the right place and at the right time — or to the right person. The person, as is well known, was Professor, now Sir, Alexander Fleming, of London University and St. Mary's Hospital. Like a number of other bacteriologists, Prof. Fleming was well aware of the phenomenon of bacterial antagonism on that historic day in 1929 when he noticed a green mold growing on one of the plates of agar on which he was culturing staphylococci. There was nothing strange about this, because mold spores are likely to be in the air of laboratories just as they often are in the air of our kitchens and pantries, to the ultimate distress of good housewives. In fact, one of the most difficult tasks is to grow colonies of germs pure and uncontaminated by other microbes. The strange thing about the green mold Prof. Fleming found on his agar plate was the fact that in the neighborhood of the mold the colonies of staphylococci were dissolving.

Prof. Fleming was, perhaps, especially alert to this aspect of the mold contaminated agar plate since he had previously discovered another biological substance capable of dissolving bacteria, or lysing them, as bacteriologists term it. This substance he had called lysozyme, because in addition to its property of lysing bacteria, it acted like an enzyme. Lysozyme is a very interesting chemical in its own right and it apparently was lysozyme, first reported in 1922, which led the Oxford scientists under Prof. W. H. Florey to their rediscovery of penicillin and its subsequent promotion to the top rank of therapeutic agents.

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Luck was with Prof. Fleming — and the world — in another way that day in 1929 when a green mold spore blew into one of his agar plates. The really great luck was that the mold happened to be Penicillium notatum. This is not a very common mold, and Prof. Florey has pointed out that contamination of a bacterial culture with it is probably infrequent. Green molds are common enough but the popular notion that the green mold so often seen on moldy bread, fruit or cheese is busily producing penicillin is far from correct. Penicillium is not at all likely to be the green mold so commonly seen. It is very discriminating in its food requirements and in the conditions under which it will produce penicillin in anything like a fair quantity, as those who first attempted large-scale penicillin production found to their sorrow. Moreover, although many molds and related organisms exhibit antagonisms to disease germs, the substances by which the effect is achieved are themselves, many of them, very toxic.

The difficulty of cultivating Penicillium notatum and particularly of extracting any sizable quantities of its anti-bacterial, penicillin, as well as the great chemical instability of penicillin, were chiefly what pushed it into the background for ten long years while countless men, women and children the world over died of infection from which penicillin could have saved them.

Prof. Fleming appreciated the clinical possibilities of penicillin as well as its bacteriological interest. He studied it further, found that in high dilution it would inhibit the growth of streptococci, staphylococci and many other organisms; that broth containing penicillin was not more toxic than ordinary broth when injected into rabbits and mice; that white blood cells were little affected by it, and suggested its use as an antiseptic for local treatment of infected wounds. Some cases of indolent septic wounds were so treated, and the results led Prof. Fleming to report that penicillin "certainly appeared to be superior to dressings containing potent chemicals."

Prof. Harold Raistrick and associates, P. W. Chutterbuck and R. Lovell, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, were next to investigate penicillin. They tried to produce it in some quantity and gained the first insight into its chemical

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nature. They found that it was an extremely unstable substance, and could obtain only very small yields. Prof. Raistrick could not induce his medical colleagues to make any clinical tests, so he published his work, in 1932, and dropped the matter. Prof. Fleming himself continued to use penicillin as a bacteriological tool, its ability to suppress the growth of sensitive organisms while permitting the growth of insensitive ones making it very useful.

While penicillin languished and the sulfa drugs made history and saved lives, Prof. A. H. Florey and many associates at Oxford were studying the possibilities and physiological significance of that other discovery of Prof. Fleming's, lysozyme. During this work, Prof. Florey and Dr. E. Chain decided to conduct a systematic investigation into the chemical and biological properties of anti-bacterial substances produced by microorganisms, the antibiotics as Prof. Waksman terms them.

"By great good fortune," as they put it, penicillin was one of the first to be investigated, in spite of the unfavorable account in the literature of its chemical properties. The fact that it prevented the growth of staphylococci was perhaps a deciding factor in its choice, since no other substance was known to be effective in controlling infection with these organisms which are responsible for much sickness, from boils to a very serious form of blood poisoning.

The work at Oxford proceeded along three lines, chemical, bacteriological and biological, before the crucial clinical tests were made. One of the first steps was the development by Dr. N. G. Heatley of a speedy test for penicillin, so that the scientists could quickly assay penicillin-containing fluids, or those which they hoped contained the precious stuff. Penicillin, they found early in the work, is an acid which rapidly loses its activity in the acid form and is also destroyed by alkali, but is stable at a point about neutrality. As Prof. Raistrick and his group had found, the Oxford group also learned that if the penicillin-containing brew — that is, the broth on which the mold has been growing and producing penicillin — is made acid and shaken with ether, the penicillin passes into the ether. It was then discovered that if this ether was shaken with water containing the right amount of alkali, the pen-

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icillin passed from the ether to the water. The processes now used for the preparation of penicillin all depend, at one stage or another, Prof. Florey states, on transferring penicillin from a water solution to some organic solvent such as ether, chloroform and amyl acetate, and back again to water. The transfers must be made quickly and at a low temperature. When the watery solution is evaporated in a vacuum from the frozen state, a dry penicillin salt which keeps its activity for long periods is obtained.

The penicillin first obtained by the Oxford group was a brown powder which they believed was fairly pure. Actually, it contained only 1% or 2% of pure penicillin. Even that crude material, however, could stop the growth of streptococci at a dilution of 1:1,000,000 and of staphylococci and other bacteria at a dilution of 1:500,000.

While bacteriologists were testing the activity of penicillin against various organisms, finding that it could stop the growth of gas gangrene organisms, the gonococcus and meningococcus as well as streptococci and staphylococci, other scientists were studying the material for possible toxicity. They found that 10 milligrams could be injected into a mouse with little or no toxic effect. This was several hundred times the amount needed to achieve a therapeutic effect. Equally impressive were tests made on white blood cells and other body cells growing in glass vessels. The white cells were not harmed by a 1% solution of the material containing 250 units per milligram, which stopped the growth of staphylococci at a dilution of 1 to 25 millions. The white cells, in other words, could tolerate hundreds of thousands of times the amount of penicillin needed to check the growth of the germs. The importance of this finding lies in the fact that the white blood cells are the chief means by which the body deals with invading germs. Ability to overcome an infection depends largely on whether the white cells can ingest the disease germs before too many of them are killed by poisons produced by the germs. Penicillin not only does not harm the white cells but aids them — this is the secret of its curative property — by stopping the growth of the germs so that they do not grow too numerous for the white cells to handle.

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Equally striking was the discovery that the activity of penicillin was not impaired by pus, blood, or the breakdown products of dead tissues and was very little affected by the number of bacteria present. This contrasts sharply with the sulfa drugs, which are adversely affected by the above factors.

Penicillin, it was also found, can be absorbed after injection into muscle or under the skin and from the small intestine. It cannot be effectively given by mouth because the acid in the stomach destroys it.

With all these encouraging facts at hand, the Oxford group next tried what are known as mouse protection tests. These consist in inoculating a certain number of mice with germs which will certainly kill them if successful treatment is not given. Usually, half the inoculated mice are given the treatment under trial while the other half are left untreated to serve as controls or checks on the experiment. Describing this phase of the penicillin investigations, Prof. Florey stated in a lecture at the Royal Institution:

> We sat up through the night injecting penicillin every three hours into the treated group, and I must confess that it was one of the more exciting moments when we found in the morning that all the untreated mice were dead and all the penicillin-treated ones alive.
>
> The diseases treated experimentally were caused by the streptococcus, the staphylococcus and a gas gangrene organism. Against the latter two organisms there is no other really effective drug.

The next step was to try the drug on man. Since a man is about three thousand times the weight of a mouse, it took months of labor with the methods then used to produce enough penicillin for this trial. To the scientists' consternation, when they finally had enough to inject one small dose, the patient started shivering and his temperature rose. This reaction, it turned out, was not due to penicillin but to an impurity in the material they were using, which could easily be removed.

The first clinical trials of penicillin were made by Dr. C. M. Fletcher, of Friern Emergency Hospital, London, and Dr. M. E. Florey, Prof. Florey's wife. In the first two cases, the amount that would be needed for a severe infection was underestimated. Though the patients were not cured, there were good indications

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of benefit from the penicillin. In the next four cases, two with severe sepsis, the results were so encouraging that, in Prof. Florey's words, "it became imperative to procure larger quantities of penicillin."

The scene now shifts to America. The work at Oxford had been carried on during war and bombings, conditions which Prof. Florey and his many associates well knew intensified enormously the need for a substance like penicillin which could overcome the chief deadly infections of war wounds. However, production of penicillin in any large amounts was beyond the abilities of English manufacturing plants at that time. The Rockefeller Foundation, which had already been contributing grants to the work, accordingly brought Prof. Florey and Dr. Heatley to this country to enlist help on the problem. They went immediately to the National Academy of Sciences and to Dr. Charles Thom, Principal Mycologist in the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Dr. Thom sent them to Peoria, Ill., where members of the staff of the Northern Regional Research Laboratory had already had extensive experience in mold fermentation. Dr. Robert D. Coghill, chief of the fermentation division, remembers that the English scientists "arrived on a hot day in July, 1941, and sold us on the problem."

Within the next six months a very important discovery was made at this laboratory, a discovery said to be possibly the greatest single factor in making the commercial production of penicillin feasible. This was the finding, by Dr. A. J. Moyer, microbiologist, that the addition of corn steep liquor to the medium on which the mold grew increased the yields of penicillin by at least tenfold. Dr. Moyer also was able to find a highly productive strain of Penicillium notatum. These two developments greatly increased the yields of penicillin.

At the same time that the Peoria laboratory started working on penicillin production, certain drug and chemical manufacturing firms (Merck, Squibb, Pfizer and Lederle) became interested and started experimentation of their own. The efforts of these firms and those later engaging in the work, as well as of the government laboratories, were coordinated into a penicillin production and

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clinical testing program by Dr. A. N. Richards, chairman, committee on medical research of the Office of Scientific Research and Development. The War Production Board took over the problems of priorities for supplies and equipment for the rapidly growing group of manufacturing houses, while to Dr. Chester N. Keefer, of the Evans Memorial Hospital, Boston, went the hardest job of all.

As head of the clinical testing program, he had to decide who should and who should not get penicillin. The prime consideration on which these often heart-breaking decisions were based was that of military need. Penicillin was the only substance that offered promise of conquering the worst infections in war wounds, staphylococci and gas gangrene. If it lived up to its promise, the Army and Navy obviously must have first call on the slender supply. Penicillin might be effective in checking other infections that afflict fighting men and reduce military efficiency. These also, gonorrhea for one example, were given priority in the clinical testing program. Some of the early supplies of penicillin went directly to the Army and Navy for testing in their own hospitals. The reports from individual military hospitals were pooled for study as a whole, so that evaluation of penicillin's effectiveness could be made on as large a number of cases as possible. Supplies were also allotted to civilian hospitals having adequate facilities for clinical investigation.

"The civilian patient gets penicillin," Dr. Keefer declared, "if the knowledge gained from his case will help a soldier."

As early as October, 1941, reports of favorable results with clinical trials of penicillin were beginning to appear in American medical literature. By the summer of 1942, its value had been well established and in May, 1943, Dr. Richards released the first statement from his committee on the production and clinical investigation. At that time he stated:

> There is good reason for the belief that it is far superior to any of the sulfonamides in the treatment of Staphylococcus aureus infections with and without bacteremia, including acute and chronic osteomyelitis, cellulitis, carbuncles of the lip and face, pneumonia and empyema, infected wounds and burns. It is also extremely effective in the treatment of hemolytic streptococcus, pneumococcus and gonococcus infec-

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tions which are resistant to sulfonamides. It has not been found effective in the treatment of subacute bacterial endocarditis.

To that list may now be added, at least tentatively on the basis of promising results in the first trials, syphilis and relapsing fever.

Penicillin is not a cure-all. Successful results in syphilis led to the hope that it would prove effective against infections with other parasites as high on the biologic scale as the spirochete or perhaps higher. Unfortunately, however, the mold chemical has turned out to have no value in malaria and probably has none in filariasis, that strange tropical disease which has afflicted some of our fighting men. Neither is penicillin effective in dysentery, ulcerative colitis or in virus infections.

Spectacular as have been penicillin's history and achievements, the future seems to promise equally dramatic activities in the new kind of germ-fighting medical scientists have now embarked upon. Elucidation of the chemical structure of penicillin and its laboratory synthesis may be only the first steps. Commercial manufacture of a synthetic penicillin, even when it becomes possible, may be too costly in comparison with production by the mold. That has been the experience in large-scale commercial production of other chemicals, such as gluconic acid. Penicillin, however, has stimulated the search for other antibiotics and may lead to further productive study of the metabolism of microorganisms and the enzymes by which they act. From such knowledge should come not only new weapons for fighting germs but better, more rational use of those we already have.

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Count Rumford, "The International Egotist"

Frederic H. Young

BEFORE the public library in the city of Woburn, Massachusetts, the citizens daily pass a statue of a man below whose erect, full-length figure is this simple legend, carved on the front face of the pedestal: BENJAMIN THOMPSON — COUNT RUMFORD. Probably few of the inhabitants of this quiet New England community pause to meditate upon the extraordinary career of the man honored by that statue. Much less are the Woburn folk likely to remember that their ancestors once attacked Benjamin Thompson so violently that he almost lost his life; that he was later thrown into the local jail; that he was tried and acquitted of alleged treason by the Committee of Correspondence — finally to leave the country in despair and resentment.

On the Maximilianstrasse in Munich, Bavaria, stands a larger and more elegant statue, the original of the one in Woburn. There is also in Munich a memorial to Benjamin Thompson, erected in the English Garden which he designed and executed — a memorial which reads: "To him who eradicated the most scandalous of public evils, Idleness and Mendacity, who gave to the poor help, occupation, and morals, and to the youth of the Fatherland so many schools of culture. Go, Wanderer! Try to emulate him in thought and deed, and us in gratitude."

Born in 1753 at Woburn, Benjamin Thompson spent twenty-four of his sixty-one years in America, eight in England, fifteen in Bavaria, and fourteen in France. Because he passed nearly two-

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thirds of his life in Europe, his contributions to military and physical science and to statesmanship are less well-known here than abroad. Yet his attainments suggest an intellectual power and versatility which entitle him to a place beside Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson as one of the four greatest intellects produced in nearly two centuries by the American colonies. Moreover, it is safe to say that, with the single exception of Franklin, there has been no American in our history who has matched Thompson's impressive record of titles, honors, and achievements.

His Tory sympathies and activities have undoubtedly been largely responsible for our neglect of him. Yet his contemporaries in America were not so prejudiced. In 1799, sixteen years after he had left Long Island as Commander of an English Regiment of Dragoons, he was invited by the Secretary of War of the United States Government to become the first Superintendent of the first Military Academy in our nation — an academy soon to be established permanently at West Point. Now, one hundred and forty-five years later, there are in the United States only a few testimonials to his many accomplishments. Among the most conspicuous are the statue in Woburn and the Rumford Press, in Concord, New Hampshire, which has adopted his coat of arms. In reference to Concord there is a romantic touch, for when asked by the Elector of Bavaria what title he desired in being made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, Sir Benjamin (he had been knighted by the King of England in 1784) replied: "Rumford," the pre-Revolutionary name for Concord, where Thompson had taught and married before the Revolution severed his American connection. For the rest, most of his fellow-countrymen know less about him than about any other great American.[1]

Measured by modern academic standards, Thompson's education in Woburn must have been of a desultory sort. All that is known at present of his early intellectual development is that at the age of fourteen he computed an eclipse to within four seconds

[1] A definitive biography of Rumford has not yet appeared. The most exhaustive is that entitled: *Memoir of Sir Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, with Notices by his Daughter* by G. E. Ellis, which appeared in 1871 under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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of perfect accuracy, and that he occasionally walked the nine miles to Cambridge with his lifelong friend, Loammi Baldwin, to hear Professor Winthrop of Harvard lecture in science. After serving as merchant's apprentice in Boston and Salem, he left at the age of nineteen to teach in Rumford, where he married the wealthy widow of Colonel Benjamin Rolfe. This marriage gave him social standing and comparative wealth. In a short time he had made such an impression upon Governor Wentworth that he was commissioned as a Major in the militia.

The shadow of the approaching American Revolution was now to fall upon the promising future of the handsome and capable major. Aristocratic by nature, bearing, and choice, he leaned so far to the Tory side that he was forced to flee Rumford and later Woburn, and eventually to leave America on a frigate from Newport in November 1775, at the age of twenty-two. It seems that he never saw or wrote to his wife again; twenty-two years later, however, he was to see the daughter he had left in her infancy.

In England Thompson became intimate with Lord Germain, Secretary of the Colonial Office, with the result that in 1780 he was appointed Undersecretary of State under Germain. During the previous year he had been made a Member of the Royal Society of London, as a result of his experiments with gunpowder, the velocity of bullets, and the explosive force of gases, his figures on the latter remaining standard for a century. For these experiments he devised his own ingenious equipment.

With the fall of Yorktown, Lord Germain (and hence Thompson) was in disrepute with Lord North and the King. Thompson decided to activate his commission as a lieutenant-colonel of Horse Dragoons by joining his regiment in New York. He fought bravely as an officer in Carolina against General Marion and later in Huntington, Long Island, as commander of his own regiment. In Huntington he vexed the citizens considerably by establishing his headquarters over a cemetery ground. What Nathaniel Prime thought of him may be found in his *History of Long Island.*

With the signing of the peace treaty in 1782 Thompson re-

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turned to England. The pattern of events was unfavorable to his promotion, and he retired from the Army with a colonel's half pay for life. He decided upon a trip to the Continent: there was the possibility of participating in wars in Austria or Russia. At a parade in Strassbourg, however, Prince Maximilian observed his striking figure on horseback. It had been by appearing on horseback in parade that he had impressed Governor Wentworth. Now the Prince was as charmed with him as the Governor and Lord Germain had been. The upshot was that Thompson proceeded to Munich, where he made an immediate and lasting impression on Charles Theodore, the Elector of Bavaria. He was invited to remain and serve as aide-de-camp with the rank of colonel.

Since it was necessary to receive the King's consent, he returned to England, where he was knighted in 1784. Then he went back to Munich, where he rose with increasing distinction for the next fifteen years. With Yankee vigor he launched a program of public works, improvement of the Army, and was especially successful in abolishing beggary, which had become the most acute problem of the Government. In every undertaking he demonstrated highly useful and resourceful capacities. Gouverneur Morris visited him in Munich and testified in his journal to Thompson's statesmanship.

In 1791 Thompson was created a Count of the Holy Roman Empire under the title of Rumford. Other honors gravitated toward the "Woburn lad," as the painter Trumbull once called him. The Order of St. Stanislaus was conferred by the King of Poland; he was made a member of nearly every important learned society in Europe, including the Berlin Academy. In the Government he rose to be Privy Counsellor of State and Head of the War Department. All the while he had been engaged in scientific investigations concerning the nature of heat which were to be regarded by future generations as his greatest achievement, and to place him among the front-rank scientists of all time.

In 1795 he left Bavaria for England. He read his paper on the nature of heat to the Royal Society. His daughter Sarah joined him from America and together they went to Munich the follow-

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ing year. Upon his return during the French and Austrian War, he found the city about to come under siege, since it stood directly in the path of the opposing armies. The Elector fled eight days after the Count's arrival, leaving him in supreme command. The Count negotiated so skillfully with both French and Austrian commanders that they did not enter the city.

In recognition of this adroit service he was appointed Minister to the Court of St. James from Bavaria. Again Rumford left for England to secure the King's permission, but this time he was unsuccessful. Apparently he did not realize the incongruity involved in the appointment of a British subject and retired Army officer to this position. At any rate, having failed in his mission, he purchased a residence in Brompton Row, Knightsbridge, and settled down in England, where he published his chief literary work: *Essays Political, Economical, and Philosophical.*

In September 1799, with Washington still alive, the former loyalist was asked by Rufus King, American ambassador to England, to become Superintendent of a military academy in America. King conveyed the proposal for the Secretary of War in these words: "In the course of the last year we have made provision for the institution of a Military Academy and we wish to commit its formation to your experience, and its future government to your care. . . ." Wisely, Rumford declined.

In 1800 he founded the Royal Institution. Within its walls men of scientific genius have made many brilliant discoveries. Rumford was the first to discern the genius of Humphry Davy and engaged him for research. Dr. Garnett, Thomas Young, Faraday, Tyndall, Dewar, and Bragg all labored in this institution. Yet within a year of its establishment the founder fell out with the officials and left in haughty anger for Paris.

From this time on he passed a restless existence. We catch glimpses of him dining with the Emperor Napoleon; then he is off to Munich, Mannheim, or Vienna, and back to Paris. He became enamored of the widow of the celebrated French chemist Lavoisier, who had been guillotined in the Revolution, and on October 24, 1805, married her. The Count had written to his daughter, who had returned to America, that Madame was "goodness

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itself," but inside of six months it was apparent that neither of those powerful personalities would ever be able to adjust itself to the other.

They separated in 1809. The Count became more and more melancholy, but continued his absorption in scientific pursuits. A member of the French Institute since 1803, he read a second paper before that body in 1811, with an exhibition of fourteen lamps of his own making. The next year he read to the Institute his inquiries on heat and described his calorimeter.

LaFayette was one of the witnesses to Rumford's last will and testament, in which he provided amply for his daughter; bequeathed an annuity of a thousand dollars to Harvard University, afterwards used to establish the Rumford Professorship in that institution; gave all his books on military science to the United States Government, and to Sir Humphry Davy "my plain gold watch, as a token of my esteem." He died on August 21, 1814, and was buried in the cemetery at Auteuil, near Paris. The French Institute listened to the eulogy by the eminent naturalist, Cuvier.

Most significant among his varied attainments were his contributions to science, which were of two sorts — philanthropic and experimental. Among his accomplishments of the first kind was the founding of the Royal Institution. Of considerable, if not equal importance, was his donation in 1796 of a thousand pounds to the Royal Society, "to the end that the interest of the same may be . . . applied and given once every second year as a premium to the author of the most important discovery, or useful improvement on Heat and Light." He made a similar grant on identical terms to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Rumford himself was awarded the first Rumford Medal in 1802 by the Royal Society. No award was made of the Rumford Medal by the American Academy until forty years later, when it was given to Dr. Hare of Philadelphia for his work on the compound blow-pipe.

Generous as was his philanthropic assistance to science, even more important were Rumford's contributions through brilliant and original experiments into the nature of heat. Just as Lavoisier

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had put an end to the notion of phlogiston in chemistry, so Rumford destroyed the notion of the existence in substances of a special igneous fluid called "caloric." Observing the amount of heat released when a cannon casting was bored in the Munich arsenal, he began experiments. Hylander has described the first of these famous experiments thus:

> He made a hole in the solid end of a partially bored cannon; in the hole he placed a thermometer. Then an iron borer was pressed against the hole, backed by a pressure of ten thousand pounds, and the cannon was revolved by horsepower. When Thompson removed the thermometer he found it registered one hundred and thirty degrees Fahrenheit. The cannon weighed more than a hundred pounds, the boring dust produced by the process weighed only a seventh of a pound. Yet according to the fluid theory of heat this small amount of powder must have had enough heat squeezed out of it to raise the temperature of the cannon casting some seventy degrees. Impossible, reasoned Thompson.

In this experiment Rumford had allowed the air to circulate inside the cannon cylinder; therefore, to determine whether the air had conveyed any heat to his apparatus he forced it out by means of a piston. The result was identical. A further question arose. Was it possible that some heat had been produced by friction between the piston and the cylinder bore? So he proceeded to put the whole apparatus under water, the cannon, of course, being revolved by horsepower each time. In two and a half hours the water was boiling.

"It would be difficult," says Rumford in his report, "to describe the surprise and astonishment expressed in the countenances of the bystanders on seeing so large a quantity of cold water heated and actually made to boil without any fire."

Reasoning on this final experiment, he observed that heat could not have been produced by the air or the water, since it would not be receiving and giving off heat at the same time. As long as the friction was continued, heat was "given off in a constant stream, in all directions, without diminution or exhaustion." Testing further, he correlated the amount of friction with the amount of heat, proved that mechanical energy could be converted into heat energy, and drew the great generalization in a masterly paper which he delivered before the Royal Society of London in 1795.

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He summed up the argument in this climactic paragraph:

> It is hardly necessary to add, that anything which any insulated body, or system of bodies, can continue to furnish without limitation cannot possibly be a material substance; and it appears to me to be extremely difficult, if not quite impossible, to form any distinct idea of anything being capable of being excited and communicated in the manner the Heat was excited and communicated in these experiments, except it be MOTION.

"Caloric" was dead: within fifty years it was generally conceded that heat was a form of motion. Sir Humphry Davy further confirmed Rumford's position by rubbing two cakes of ice together until they were completely dissolved by friction. Upon the basis of this understanding of heat the science of thermodynamics was constructed. Carnot, Joule, Helmholtz, Mayer, and Lord Kelvin built upon his workable theory. It led the way to the Theory of the Conservation of Energy, which Slosson has designated as "the greatest generalization the human mind has yet conceived." But Mayer's work was made possible by Rumford's proof that mechanical and heat energy were convertible.

A word should be said about his capacity as an inventor. He invented very ingenious devices for his experiments — practical items, such as the "Rumford" burner, flues, lamps, and a new code of marine signals. Rarely has one man of science been theorist, philanthropist, and inventor — the combination so remarkably realized in Count Rumford.

Yet even these capabilities do not compass his achievements. He was soldier, courtier, statesman, as well. Involved in colorful and consequential events, he remained, however, distinctly aloof from all his environments. The portrait by Gainsborough in the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, indicates a self-possessed and masterful nature. As Tyndall put it, "In Thompson, flexible wisdom formed an amalgam with despotic strength."

There was a dark side to his soul, evidenced by his two unhappy marriages and his status as a man essentially "without a country." He could never discover a basic patriotism. As a political man — in Aristotle's and Thomas Mann's sense of the word — he was an Ishmaelite throughout his life. He complains to his daughter that "This unfortunate war [the Napoleonic struggle

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with Britain] chains me to the spot. . . . I am so situated between three governments that I am obliged almost to turn into a cypher." It was his alleged lack of love for home and country that exposed him in his time to the opprobrium of being called "the international egotist."

It is regrettable that Benjamin Thompson could not have lived the major part of his life in America — as did that other Benjamin, born only twelve miles from him in Boston. There is no record that the two Benjamins ever met or showed the slightest interest in each other's attainments, nor is there any reference to the other in the writings of either.

Yet, standing before the Woburn and Munich statues in 1939, I could not suppress speculations as to what might have been achieved if Franklin and Thompson could have worked together in that birthtime of our nation. What project comparable to the Royal Institution might have been founded and might have advanced America's scientific coming-of-age by half a century? What further respect might we not have commanded from Europe if, to the attainments of Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Franklin, there could have been added those, not of Count Rumford, but of plain though genius-gifted Benjamin Thompson?

The life of our greatest exile is worthy of our contemplation. It was a life of solitary genius lived with epic sweep, yet in a fundamental sense frustrated by its isolation from the normal influences of home and native soil. Notwithstanding, the impact of his genius remains with us.

Let the legend on the east side of his monument in Woburn summarize his life in all its power and in its suggestion of an underlying tragedy:

> Benjamin Thompson — Count Rumford, born in Woburn, March 26, 1753, died in Paris, August 21, 1814. The earliest Scientific Philanthropist, he designed many public gardens, contributed to the comforts and enjoyments of the people. He proved that heat is motion and had a glimpse of the great doctrine known later as The Conservation of Energy. In exile he won high places of trust and command.

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Itself Unmoving

Nancy Kirby

Miles are miles on miles
And hours add hours
To the day, to the light
When down the darks
Fold out the night.
Repeat the daynightday.
The earth so moves to show the sun
Hide the curl of moon sometimes
Trace with stars paths
Of movement thin clouds
Intermediary then rain.
Days. There was summer.
There was late summer
Before autumn cold cut sun
And stars. Nights.
The brown fade we saw plainly
In the afternoon autumn
Turning to shade
The cupped moon
Snow then and winds.
Nights. Call them winter nights.
The grass grows upside down.
The winds come in when
We open the door
And call it winter here.
It is deeper winter there.
Six o'clock here and there.

The hour in common is one
Thing. The same miles
Between and the same hours
Distance we have between

© NANCY KIRBY has her first published poem in this issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. She was graduated from the Woman's College, University of North Carolina, in the class of 1944.

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The moving to turn
Sun-day moonight summerwinter.
This afternoon the common tongue
I have this six o'clock winter afternoon
And you have it.
We have it not together.
Not together, there are miles,
Hours, remember
Special togetherones.
(But they are old carefully
So folded not to wrinkle
And I love them
Which were together)
And if I may say it
I love this six o'clock alone,
Being not alone,
Nodding recognition
To miles and hours,
Talking of them when the door is shut.
Being not alone
We have it not together.
But there is this six o'clock
Which is not forever but
It is here and that is something.
It is time and you know it
Is a long way and a long time
Between six o'clocks and how
You can hear me I don't know.
I know it is
And outside is almost dark.
Being not alone,
Being together.
No six o'clock no almost dark
No words no walls no afternoon
No daynight no december
Only this
Together.

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The Revolving Bookstand

"Most Happifying Purposes"

Gerald W. Johnson

In the book with which he won the Pulitzer history prize in 1944[1] Mr. Merle Curti quotes a sage of the early days of the republic — one Charles Turner, of Massachusetts, writing in 1783 — as saying that if the people were raised to wisdom by proper instruction they would use their newly won freedom for "the greatest and most happifying purposes."

It is a thought that has been somewhat obscured by the dust and heat of more than a century and a half; but I, for one, believe it is sound. Hedonism it may be, but the conjunction of the greatest and the most happifying purposes seems to me in no wise unnatural; on the contrary, I am persuaded that a very plausible argument may be constructed to support the theory that instruction which is well designed to promote the most happifying purposes will almost certainly promote the greatest purposes also. If the instruction is in the field of history, I am quite sure of it; and I suspect that it is true of other fields as well.

It is therefore with no trepidation whatever that a layman observes what seems to be an increasing tendency on the part of American historians to consider the happiness of the reader as they construct their works. Indeed, it is with reassurance, the contrary of trepidation, that the layman descries this tendency; for historians, as is usual in times of stress, have been under heavy fire recently. What with Mr. H. G. Wells' remark that the war is the result of the bad teaching of history, and the New York *Times*' discovery that American history is too inconsiderable — or, it may be, too uncertain, or too deadly dull — a subject to be required for the B.A. degree in many colleges, the laity have developed a decided belief that there is something wrong with history as it is commonly presented. Too many, indeed, looking back upon their own schooldays, remember the subject as mystifying, or terrifying, or perhaps merely stupefying, but rarely as happifying.

As to what has happened in the classroom I am not competent to speak. For aught I know to the contrary, the subject may still be presented there in as dull and unimaginative a fashion as was prevalent during my own school days, but as regards the adult reader the case is certainly different. The American of mature years now has available a wide variety of volumes in the field of American history written, not for the purpose of securing a Ph.D. for the author, but to be read by stockbrokers, dry-goods merchants, bankers and manufacturers, as well as by teachers of history. Some, indeed, seem designed to be read by anybody except teachers of history; and these are not by any means the worst.

As evidence of this trend — but very slight evidence, indeed the merest sampling of a class of books that includes many times as many titles — I cite, in addition to Mr. Curti's book, three others that have achieved considerable success in recent months.[2] By way of adding perspective to the picture I have added to these the latest biography of

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GERALD W. JOHNSON, formerly an editorial writer for *The Baltimore Sun*, is now a free-lance newspaperman. Among his many books are *Roosevelt: Dictator or Democrat?* and *American Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

[1] *The Growth of American Thought*, by Merle Curti. New York: Harper & Bros. 848 pp. $5.

[2] *The Republic*, by Charles A. Beard. New York: The Viking Press. 365 pp. $3.

The Year of Decision: 1846, by Bernard DeVoto. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 538 pp. $3.50.

America, by Stephen Vincent Benet. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 122 pp. $1.50.

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the earliest great American historian [3] for its reminder of how things were done in days gone by.

It would be difficult to find four writers of equally respectable attainments whose points of view are more completely independent. Only one of the four, Mr. Curti, will tolerate the designation of a historian, and he cannot well avoid it, since he is Professor of History in the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Beard tartly asserts that he is not a historian, but a student of history. Mr. DeVoto doubtless would be content to accept the title that Wells gave himself: "A journalist exploiting history." Mr. Benet was a poet. But these protests are not conclusive. Goethe thought he was a scientist, and Leonardo da Vinci really was a colonel of engineers. In the eyes of the reading public, if not in their own, they are historians, for they write history.

Furthermore, in spite of their wide differences, they belong in the same group because they all wrote books intended to be read with pleasure. Mr. Curti, too? Yes, Mr. Curti, too; for while his book is written more nearly in the academic style than the others and is the only one with any assumption of authority, it sedulously avoids pedantic obscurity and is lightened with flashes of humor that the brethren of the pompous school would never have admitted.

Mr. Curti, indeed, may deserve to rank as the foremost optimist in the group. I do not refer to his title alone, although that constitutes a pretty good claim: "growth" is a very cheerful word to apply to the process of American thought. In the political field, for example, the thinking that produced the party platforms of 1944 does not impress one as exhibiting any marked increase in maturity over the thinking that produced the Constitution. But aside from the title the book exhibits a notably sanguine temperament as to what, by implication at least, it ranks as thought. Mr. Curti has hoisted from the depths of oblivion many weird and wonderful objects. A great many of his eight hundred-odd pages are devoted to scrupulously careful examination of such pundits as Orison Swett Marden, Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Elbert Hubbard.

I do not imply that he mistakes such people for philosophers. On the contrary, he rates them accurately enough; but he does include them (dozens of them) in a history of American thought — which means that his work is to that extent bloated. Yet in justice it must be admitted that he occasionally digs up a completely forgotten man who exercised a measurable influence on the American mind, as, for example, Petrus Ramus, or Pierre de la Ramée, if you prefer, whose Arminianism was a far more effective antidote for Calvinism than was Roman Catholicism.

One might wish, indeed, that some of the energy and space he lavishes on intellectual microorganisms he had devoted instead to elaboration of two ideas to which he gives little more than passing notice. True, they are both debatable; but if they were established beyond debate it seems to me that together they would impose a definite and coherent pattern upon the course of American thought.

One is the change that he asserts occurred between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the American concept of money. He believes that the average American, up to some time after the year 1800, regarded money, or any form of wealth, as merely the means to the end of providing comfort, security, and the leisure requisite to the acquisition of intrinsically desirable things. Since individual comfort, security and leisure are definitely, and rather narrowly limited, the amount of money desirable also had its limits. But in the nineteenth century the realization spread that money is power, and there is no limit to the individual's thirst for power, hence no limit to the amount of money a man may reasonably desire.

The second is his assertion that in the United States the gap between *aristoi* and *polloi* in the intellectual world is narrower than in any other country. Nor is this displacement all at one end of the scale. He grants that in America intellectual life has never reached the heights which it has attained in some other countries; but he quotes foreign observers from Tocqueville to Bryce who agree that the American masses are better informed about advances in the arts and sciences than are the masses of any other country. He makes no exceptions.

This statement does not ignore the appalling size of the gap that still yawns between American thinkers and the bulk of the population; but it is nevertheless an assertion that we have in some measure achieved the democratization of culture.

But this is gigantic. No one would call it the highest achievement of human thought, but, in view of the fact that it applies to a

[3] *George Bancroft*, by Russel B. Nye. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 340 pp. $3.50.

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population of 135,000,000, isn't it very nearly the largest? If it is true, then it is no longer necessary to argue that any American thinker is absolutely of the first rank in order to establish a vastly important American contribution to thought. It would be reckless to say that Mr. Curti has established it; but he has asserted it and offered evidence in support of his assertion. Therefore it is now the business of the opposition to disprove his assertion, if it is not to be accepted.

Mr. Beard has also written a history of American thought in one carefully restricted field, that of political government. He, too, is optimistic in his title; he calls his book *The Republic*, but he treats of only fifty per cent of the republic. He writes breezily, wittily and, more often than not, wisely about the Constitution; but he writes nothing at all about Beard. However, the republic consists of the Constitution plus Beard; that is to say, the organic law with all its variations, mutations and transformations through five generations, and all the men who have lived under it since 1787.

Government rests heavily upon the science of jurisprudence, it is true; but it rests equally heavily upon the art of ruling, which is, to a large extent, a subdivision of the art of dramaturgy. Cynics will say that I mean thaumaturgy. I don't. I mean dramaturgy, with an emphasis upon histrionics.

Mr. Beard has cast his material in the form of a series of Socratic, or Platonic, dialogues, which is evidence that he appreciates the value of a dramatic mode of presentation. He has read his Greeks carefully, and he has gathered from them, among other things, a very pretty skill in the procedure of setting up a straw man and then knocking him to pieces. As representing the modern internationalists, for example, he offers three preposterous figures — less preposterous than some living and noisy internationalists, it is true, but silly enough at that — and proceeds to work tremendous execution upon them.

This is open to criticism, and so is his interpretation of various other developments — the doctrine of loose construction, for example, and the Calhoun theory of minorities — but in the main he offers an extremely lucid and frequently diverting account of the development of constitutional theory. It is not a book to be recommended to fools, but any reasonably intelligent man can understand it and enjoy it; it is addressed to intelligent laymen and its immense success among them is well deserved.

But the fact remains that it is *Hamlet* without the Prince. Again and again the author points out that, taking premise A and adding to it premise B we should logically draw inference C but instead have frequently arrived at conclusion D. He offers no explanation of this apparent miracle, but it is plain that somewhere along the line some interfering factor must have been injected. This factor is the art of the ruler, which is essentially histrionic. In its highest form this is the art of persuading men that truth really is true; but it is not and cannot always be practised in its highest form; all too often it is practised in its lowest form, which is persuading men that truth is false. But, high or low, it consists in persuading men.

This art Beard does not even mention, but it has had as much to do with making the Constitution what it is as has the thinking of the heaviest thinkers. Furthermore, upon it rests, in large measure, the future of the republic, which is one reason why that future is so difficult to predict.

Mr. DeVoto sets up a doubtful thesis, but, happily, he does not waste much time defending it. He calls 1846 "the year of decision" because it was then that we took the Pacific coast. But that was the year of execution; the year of decision was 1844, when we acquired Texas. From the moment Texas was admitted to the Union all the events of 1846 were merely logical developments of the situation created by that admission.

Mr. DeVoto does, however, emphasize one neglected truth of history in reminding us that it was California, not Texas, for which James K. Polk was willing to fight. We had Texas already. California was the prize, notwithstanding Hosea Biglow's skepticism, and it was California that was in the President's mind from the beginning.

It is highly probable, though, that the average layman who read the DeVoto book hardly noticed either of these excellencies. From the standpoint of the lay reader the book is simply a superb panorama of the movement toward the West. The field of interest stretches from Mexico City to Oregon and the art by which attention is constantly shifted from point to point, yet constantly kept under control, is subtle enough to pass unnoted. Here is a book in the field of history that is frankly and fully directed to "the most happifying purposes." Mr. DeVoto chronicles facts — incidentally, very accurately — and pronounces judgments — incidentally, somewhat erratically

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— but it is doubtful that he cared very much either to instruct or to edify. But he did mean to entertain. If that is a motive unworthy of a historian, he must be drummed out of the ranks; but from my standpoint, as a layman, it is a superb motive, and I will joyously read any writer who accomplishes it as well.

Just before his death Stephen Vincent Benet prepared, at the request of the Office of War Information, a brief review of American history for use abroad as propaganda. But Benet, as an honest man, wrote what he believed to be true, for, as an intelligent man, he knew that truth is the best of all propaganda. After his death his publishers brought out the essay for American readers in a small volume entitled *America*.

If there is a single original idea in the book it got there by accident, for the author avoided originality as carefully as Jefferson did in writing the Declaration of Independence. As far as originality is concerned, it is fair to say that Benet's *America* is as empty as a bass drum. I prefer to say, rather, that it is as empty as the body of a cello; for it was built by a master craftsman in the handling of English, and like an apparently empty cello it is filled with resonance and power, filled with enchanting melody with the rumble of thunder underneath. It is one of that extremely small number of books that I would recommend willingly to a schoolboy of ten years, but enthusiastically to a profound scholar in American history.

Against this group of moderns, how does the figure of an old master look? Mr. Nye's study of George Bancroft, which came from the press at midsummer, fits in conveniently. The academic world's fads and fancies may be somewhat less transitory, but they are hardly less startling than those of the millinery market. Surely, even the latest so-called hat is hardly more absurd than the fact that there was a time when it was pretty generally agreed that George Bancroft was no historian at all. True, his faults were many and conspicuous and their correction was obviously necessary; perhaps the academic world was right in stressing them, for a season, to the exclusion of his virtues, and perhaps this necessary correction inevitably led to a grotesque underestimate of the man. But that underestimate nevertheless was grotesque.

The strongest impression made by Mr. Nye's biography is that of the prodigious energy of the man. Politician, diplomatist, critic, educational experimentalist, biographer, poet, businessman and incorrigible polemist, Bancroft was, in fact, only partly a historian; but that segment was so much bigger than the sum total of the average historian as to make comparison invidious, not to say odious. The ten volumes of the *History of the United States* are massive not merely in their physical size, but in the terrific amount of research that went into them. In his determination to get at the original source Bancroft, indeed, was a modern of the moderns. It was only in his treatment of his material after he had assembled it that he was old-fashioned.

His style is too turgid and ornate for modern taste, but the real charge against him is that he was prejudiced. It is a grievous fault, no doubt, but it makes a man effective. Bancroft appears to have been the Claude G. Bowers of his time. I am not prepared to assert that Mr. Bowers is the greatest living American historian, by any means, but I do believe that he has created more disturbance than any other, and I think the necessity of refuting him has stimulated a good deal of our best historical writing. Similarly, Bancroft's thunderous proclamation of Jacksonian democracy set countless others to digging furiously for material with which to combat him. To say that his prejudice was detrimental to American historiography is therefore to make a risky assertion.

In any event, he certainly wrote for what he considered "the greatest and most happifying purposes," and merely to summarize the facts he did not consider either great or happifying. As a layman with no reputation to jeopardize, I hazard the comment that maybe he was right. At any rate, when a man has studied a subject for forty years and emerges with no prejudices (by which people usually mean no strong opinions) about it, he may be as scientific as the theory of wave mechanics, but he is none the less a dull fellow and Lord deliver me from having to read his book!

Reading Mr. Nye will, I think, encourage no prudent man to try to imitate Bancroft any more than reading James Stevens inspires one to try to imitate Paul Bunyan; but it does lead to increased respect for the giant. At any rate, it is entertaining.

So, indeed, are they all. Here are five recent volumes in the field of American history, none of which will lead an intelligent man far astray from the facts, all of which will give the ordinary reader some informa-

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tion, and all of which will stimulate him to think. In other words, they are sound and valuable books. Yet not one of them is really laborious reading and most of them are charming. Scholastic diehards may complain that this represents deterioration in historical writing. I feel no obligation to refute them; but as a mere reader I stubbornly maintain that I am for that kind of deterioration; may it increase and flourish!

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OUR READERS COMMENT

In his editorial in the Spring 1944 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *Christian Gauss voiced a plea to the readers of the magazine to become more articulate. "As the Frenchmen say," he wrote,* "c'est du choc des opinions que jaillit la vérité. *Gentle reader, be not too gentle!"*

It is a source of very genuine pleasure and encouragement to the Editors to be able to present in this issue so many expressions of opinion from our readers. It seems to us at once a convincing evidence of a spontaneous response to Dean Gauss's exhortation, and a further, perhaps superfluous testimonial to the able editorship of Marjorie Nicolson, who has been guiding the fortunes of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *for the past year.*

We hope that "Our Readers Comment" will continue to grow in size — and in diversity of opinion. There are favorable and unfavorable comments in the letters printed below; there is manifest a wide divergence of opinion. This is as it should be. Needless to say, we take no responsibility for the point of view expressed in any of them, but we defend to the death the reader's right to express it. To quote Dean Gauss again,

> *The members of your Editorial Board . . . want you to realize more fully that* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *is not run for profit. It is not run for the Editorial Board. It is run for you. . . . It believes that readers make magazines. It holds with the poet that they also serve, or* can *serve, who only sit and read — providing they do something about it.*

On "Democracy and the Negro"

To the Editor: The article by Otelia Cromwell in the Spring 1944 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR achieves a much-needed juxtaposition of two important and highly controversial topics, "Democracy and the Negro." Basic in our way of life as these issues are, there is sore need for their study in as objective a fashion as is humanly possible. Neither sentimentalism, which ignores the social facts of race prejudice built upon a tradition of years, nor obscurantism, which is equally obtuse in its refusal to recognize the demands of a changing world, provides any assistance in dealing with the problem.

We must be quite clear as to the facts about race which scientific study makes available. It is folly to ignore the physical differences between peoples who vary in color, but it must be realized that science supports the statement that "talk about pure race is pure bunk." As to mental differences between the white and the Negro, we do not have evidence to support claims of superiority or inferiority in either case. Nor has the fact been established that there are differences in temperament due to biological causes.

If we are to analyze the Negro problem with anything like intelligence, we ought to recognize the common tendency of the individual to regard himself as one of a superior group distinct from other and inferior groups. We build up our own sense of importance by depreciating others. We accept the traditional prejudices because that is the easy road, because it eliminates the necessity for investigation, effort, and thought. In the words of the University of Chicago anthropologist, Redfield: "White men . . . believe that black men or yellow men are inherently different or inferior in part because such a belief is an apparent justification for the prejudices they feel and the injustice they commit. . . . What really lies in the social order, for which we are responsible, we push off into the biological order, for which we are not responsible. . . . A child of one skin color starts even with a child of any other skin color, if you let him. We don't let him, and we entertain a false biology which seems to justify us."

We need to face the facts along with our consideration of the abstract moral principles involved. The denial to thirteen million American Negroes of their just due under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights places us in a dangerously hypocritical position. Our young men are dying all around the globe in the name of the freedoms denied their people at home. The liberty of no individual or of no group is safe when the charters of our fundamental rights are thus turned into a mockery.

No intelligent person would deny the principle of leadership within a democracy, the right (and duty) of individuals who possess outstanding traits of character and intelligence to assume positions of responsibility. But this does not mean that equality of opportunity ceases to be a fundamental tenet of democracy and of "the American way." Opportunity for education, for decent living, for advancement, cannot be denied on the basis of color or race if we desire to avoid the loss of our integrity as a democratic people.

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When one notes the prevalence in this country of the Nazi brand of talk about race and democracy, one is inclined to wonder if we really know our enemies in this war. Are we to defeat Germany and Japan, only to succumb to racism and dictatorship here at home? Let us realize that such a spirit of intolerant ethnocentrism and supernationalism can only result in the narrowest sort of isolationism — the denial of everything we have suffered and sacrificed for in this war. There is reason for us to be gravely concerned about the menace of Fascism in our own land. Witness the mounting tide of anti-Semitism, the attacks upon Japanese-Americans, the attempt to make a second-class citizen of the Negro. Combine these trends with the hoary doctrine of the *paterfamilias* and take into account the American tradition of the vigilante and the deep-seated grim conviction that confusion is not something to be taken lying down. It is not difficult to see that we have the ingredients for an American Fascism which might well make the Germans seem like pikers.

We must recognize the necessity for time in working out the question of the Negro. But the argument for moderation cannot be used as a device for preventing any effective action at all. The issue is not one of miscegenation. It is entirely possible to give the Negro equal educational, political, and economic opportunities without the amalgamation of black and white. Much of the urgency of the race problem comes from the need to forestall new measures of repression. This is the first and most immediate task. Despite the rising tide of prejudice and the trend toward violence which is part of the war, this task is easier than changing established policies. In the latter case, we shall have to understand that there is a middle way; it is possible to get decent treatment for the Negro, the Jew, the Mexican, the Japanese, etc., and still avoid revolutionary action. The emphasis should be upon equal rights in the areas of economics, politics, and education.

It is true that much of the leadership for dealing with the Negro question must come from the South. But the problem of the Negro is not merely a Southern issue. It is world-wide in its implications. No intelligent person can fail to realize the significance of our treatment of the Negro against the backdrop of a world two-thirds colored. Nor can we afford to ignore the fact that the secrets of the Machine Age are no longer the sole property of the white race. Do we want to run the risk of a world-wide war between the colored and the white peoples? The power of the U.S.S.R. and its deliberate policy of racial equality must be taken into account if we are to pursue an intelligent course in dealing with the problems of race. The world of the B-29 and the robot bomb does not permit us to follow our own narrow path, blithely ignoring the effects of domestic policy upon an interdependent global community.

EUGENE E. PFAFF
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

To the Editor: One is constantly reminded of the illogical attitude taken by two classes of people in our country towards the problem of the American Negro. One class, the politician, has an attitude tempered solely by political expediency, which is understandable but regrettable. The other class, the professional reformer, molds its attitude on an ideal conception of the Negro which is hypothetical and exists nowhere in fact. This attitude is equally understandable and equally regrettable. My attention was recently focused on the latter attitude by an article entitled "Democracy and the Negro," which appeared in the Spring 1944 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

The approach to any problem should be made only after a careful consideration of the actual facts of the case, and should not be based on a fancied notion as to what the facts are, nor motivated by an ambition to approach an ideal which cannot be attained. In the effort to attain the ideal the fact is often overlooked that the elements of the situation tend to make an ideal situation impossible.

Most reformers approaching the Negro question appear to be either ignorant of, or elect to ignore, the fundamental differences between the white race and the Negro race. If no such differences existed there would be no problem. The existence of the differences creates the problem. No amount of sleight of hand tricks will make the differences vanish. The differences are biological and go back for evolutionary aeons. Not only are the differences physical, but they are also mental. The physical differences themselves are sufficient to make the races nonmiscible and impossible of living together satisfactorily on anything like an equality basis. Besides the physical differences, every one who has ever had very much contact with the Negro race knows that the psychical differences are almost, if not equally, as pronounced. The psychical differences between a red-head and a blonde or a brunette, are well recognized and almost legendary. If we recognize such differences between different types of our own race, why not recognize the vaster differences between our own race and one as far removed from it as the Negro race is. The Negro has a different outlook on life from the white man, and

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this is what is to be expected in a race that is so entirely different. In my opinion, these differences make him totally unfit for ever becoming a satisfactory American citizen.

Newspapers and current literature generally these days are full of vapid mouthings about "democracy." The word is constantly used by demagogues, professional reformers, and "have nots" who have never worked, but who want to sap the income from some "have" who has worked hard and who has honestly earned certain comforts in life. The article referred to above speaks of the aim of the Allied Nations today as being "to make democracy a living actuality for the world." Just what is meant by that trite phrase? What does it mean? If it means that every citizen of the world is to have as much to say about the running of the world as every other one, it is the utterest nonsense. The family is the primary unit of organized society and no such situation exists in any family unit. There is always a directing head who exercises a paternal influence and benevolent authority over the more immature and weaker members who require direction and protection. In my opinion, democracy has been more or less of a failure because of the failure to recognize this principle. To assume that every citizen of a democracy is capable of voting is to fly in the face of actuality and to invite disaster. It is said that the average age at which the development of intelligence is arrested lies between twelve and thirteen years. Ferguson, in a Columbia thesis, some years ago showed that the average age for the Negro is less than that for the white man.

The authoress of the article referred to above states that "Southern injustice towards the Negro is a commonplace of knowledge throughout the entire world." If she had said "a commonplace of opinion" there might possibly have been some basis for the statement. However, she does not differentiate between fact and fancy. It may be true that most of the world has an incorrect and incomplete knowledge of the attitude of the South towards the Negro. The Lord knows that Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did all that it could to create the wrong impression. Let us examine the comparative attitude of the North and the South towards the Negro. In the first place, slavery in America was introduced by New Englanders. That is common knowledge. Does our authoress and well-meaning reformer maintain that it was just for New England shipowners forcibly to take the Negro away from his native habitat and sell him into slavery, while it was unjust for Southerners to buy him? It is rather striking also that as soon as the practice of

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— Orville Prescott, *New York Times*

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bringing slaves to America was discontinued by law, and thereby a source of revenue for New Englanders discontinued, they became suddenly and vocally aware of the horrors of slavery. In the meantime the South had, in the beginning, been very reluctant to accept slavery, and a great many of the leaders had consistently been opposed to it. Northern interference, however, prevented the South from reaching any decent solution of the problem. Meanwhile the slaves were treated with the benevolent paternalism existing in any family. Someone has said that the issues of the Civil War took the Negro out of the pantry and put him in the cellar.

As to the present-day treatment of the Negro in the two sections of the country there are two main differences: Firstly, the South makes no pretense at equality and governs itself accordingly, while the North makes the pretense, but does not come across. Secondly, the Negro in the South lives among people who understand and take at face value his many good qualities and his many shortcomings, while the Negro in the North lives among strangers who understand neither.

Again our authoress-reformer states that (italics hers) "*thoughtful Americans throughout the country ought to acknowledge the mockery in what passes for democracy in our own country; thoughtful Americans ought to understand that no program based on the principle of segregation will ever solve America's race problem.*" I wonder if she had anything besides some vague unattainable, unrealistic ideal in mind when she wrote that. If she meant by it that some Negro worker with his pockets full of money made in the glutted war industries should be allowed to go into a decent white neighborhood and buy one of the best homes, she is advocating something that cannot ever be worked out in practice. The biological differences in the races, mentioned above, preclude it. There are millions of white people all over the country who would not for a moment stand for it. This applies to both North and South. Our early conception of democracy purported to provide for Americans the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Happiness can never be obtained for either white or black by attempts to mix them up together socially. A Negro buying a house in a white neighborhood would be just as unhappy as the whites. Segregation is the natural procedure. Any other procedure is unnatural. Why can't we face it as a practical issue instead of as an abstruse and unattainable theoretical ideal?

Our authoress also said in her article that "If, to some Americans, the attack on Pearl Harbor is less significant than the fall of Richmond, and the Stars and Bars commands greater respect than the Stars and Stripes, the patriotism that inspires this kind of thought and feeling should not be adopted today by Americans who understand what America is fighting for." That sounds like a bitter partisan pre-Civil War political campaign speech. There are many people all over the country who will be ashamed of an American having written such stuff. Much has been said about the "American way of life," but I do not believe that intelligent thought, either North or South, would include in that way of life anything of social equality between the races. But if, perchance, there is a difference of opinion in different parts of the country with regard to this (which I do not believe there is), isn't it a part of the "democratic" system to let each part determine its own course in the matter? With all the mouthings about the liberty we are fighting for it would seem that there are still some people who are trying to impose their will on others regardless. The South would have handled its Negro problem much better in the past if it had been allowed to do so without interference. This goes for the future also. The Federal Government imposed its will on California, in the matter of its race problem, in order to prevent a war. We have the war and still have the race problem. Would it not have been much better to have been frank and honest about the matter, and to have said simply that we did not want the other races, not because we felt they were inferior, but because they were nonmiscible and non-assimilable? Biology is stronger than sentiment. The sooner we come to a rational realization of this, the sooner we will be capable of a sane approach to all race problems.

AMOS R. KOONTZ, M.D.
San Francisco, California

To the Editor: The article, "Democracy and the Negro," by Miss Otelia Cromwell which appeared in the Spring issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR calls attention to the glaring inconsistencies between American theory and practice as the democratic way of life is related to the Negro in this country. Miss Cromwell cites segregation — particularly in housing and schools — as evidence of discrimination. To this she might well have added many other Jim Crow regulations which follow the formula "separate but equal" yet have discrimination for their purpose. Practically all public facilities, such as libraries, parks, and hospitals, are poorer for Negroes than for whites. Miss Cromwell's presumption seems to be that if we could but eliminate segregation we would eliminate much of the inequality. This may or

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may not be true, but it does not allow for several facts which must be taken into consideration as we work on this problem.

There is attached to the Negro in this country, particularly the southeast region, a historical memory of slavery and inferiority. Many of our parents grew up knowing the Negro only as an illiterate servile being. Today, less than a hundred years since that being was freed, many white Americans still carry a stereotype of "The Negro" — thinking of him as having a lower innate intelligence than the white man, being lazy, shiftless, and immoral. The average white American still considers amalgamation undesirable. He shudders at the thought of the free mingling of Negro and white which one finds in the street cafes and theatres of Paris and Marseilles. Many of our white citizens continue to talk of "physical differences," "psychical differences," or "biological differences" between the two races — ideas which developed out of the institution of slavery, and almost always focus upon the inferiority of the Negro. This is a social fact which Miss Cromwell must take into consideration as she recommends the abolition of segregation.

It is true that our anthropologists and psychologists have not been able to find marked physical or psychical differences between our two racial groups. We have moved a long way in research from the biased study of such men as G. O. Ferguson and Albert Crane who attempted to prove the superiority of the whites. Crane, you will remember, frankly admitted that the purpose of his studies was to explain "the impulsiveness, the improvidence and immorality which the Negro everywhere manifests." Our scientists today recognize that we have only begun to develop a methodology that is capable of measuring similarities and differences. In making measurements, it is necessary to take into account economic status, age and sex groups, etc. For example: many people allege that "Negroes have a peculiar odor." The implication is that this is a hereditary quality. As a matter of fact, our scientists have not been able to verify this observation and it is quite probable that the Negro group have fewer bathtubs, less running water in their houses, and less education in hygiene than the white with whom they are being compared. In summarizing the findings of all the studies which have been made comparing the two races, Gunnar Myrdal says, "When we approach these problems on the hypothesis that differences in behavior are to be explained largely in terms of social and cultural factors, we are on scientifically safe ground. If we should approach them on the hypothesis that they are to be explained primarily

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in terms of heredity, we do not have any scientific basis for our assumption." The wise American citizen recognizes the validity of Dr. Myrdal's conclusion, and uses the findings of these studies cautiously. The average citizen, however, knows little about studies which have been made, and "the race dogma" continues to be the basis upon which he defines Negro-white relations. Miss Cromwell must recognize the necessity for education of this latter group in changing our present patterns of relationship.

With Miss Cromwell I would agree when she says, "Thoughtful Americans throughout the country ought to acknowledge the mockery of what passes for democracy in their own country." I cannot follow through at the present time to her conclusion that "thoughtful Americans ought to understand that no program based upon the principle of segregation will ever solve America's race problem." In terms of ultimates this may be true. For today — it does not seem realistic. The point which is important is that all citizens — Negro and white — shall have a chance to share equally in all that our culture has created. So, instead of fighting — at this moment — for the *same* schools for Negroes and whites, why not fight for (1) adequate schools for all, and (2) compulsory school attendance, and make it effective? In 1935 in ten southern states the current expense per pupil in daily attendance per year in elementary and secondary schools was $17.04 for Negroes, and almost three times that much, or $49.30, for white children. To get at this kind of inequality let us go back to some of the measures in Congress which provide federal aid to education. All federal grants given to states for educational purposes should then be conditioned upon an equitable distribution of funds for both races. We already have a good precedent for this in several of the New Deal programs.

Similarly, the matter of segregation in housing, which Miss Cromwell argues against, might better be argued in terms of decent housing for both Negro and white. For example — under the Housing Division of PWA, about one third of the dwelling units are for Negroes. The United States Housing Authority has had a definite policy of giving the Negro his share.

At a time when race tension is high in this country, we must not sacrifice long-time values in an eagerness to win quick but bitter victories for the Negroes. To demand that white and Negro children sit in the same classrooms of the South today, would be to arouse prejudice, hate, bitterness, and suffering. To demand that all children — Negro and white — be given adequate schooling, decent public health protection, suitable housing, and necessary recreational facilities — and make federal provision for stimulating such services in the states, will lead eventually to the new day about which Miss Cromwell writes and which we all are seeking.

MEREB E. MOSSMAN
Woman's College, University of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina

On "The New Criticism"

To the Editor: I am grateful to the editors of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR for their publication of Professor Cleanth Brooks's article, "The New Criticism: A Brief for the Defense," in reply to my recent paper, "Intellectual Criticism." Professor Brooks's strategy of defense is apparently reasonable: He offers a sample of his criticism and asks readers to judge whether my strictures justly apply to it — an admirable procedure if we are assured (1) that the relevance or irrelevance of my criticisms is specifically considered in his comments on his example, and (2) that the example is fully typical of his usual practice. I think that Professor Brooks's article does not satisfy these requirements and consequently does not bear very considerably upon the points I raised in my paper; I wish to remark some of the disjunctions between our arguments.

First, what is the specifically poetic quality or function of poems? Does it consist in the employment of the irony, paradoxes, and dramatic indirections which Professor Brooks discovers in Tennyson? I objected to a too narrowly defined conception of what poetry is and does: Professor Brooks has replied by showing how he thinks poetry should be read. I agree with him that poetry should be read as closely and scrupulously as can be, and nothing in my paper can reasonably be construed as favoring the view that a vaguely snatched impression of the poem is to be preferred to an attentive reading. Further, I gratefully acknowledge Professor Brooks's service to readers, myself among them, in insisting that a poem is fully appreciated only when it is understood.

However, we do evidently differ about the importance to be attached to such analytical reading, and, although the point was not raised in my paper, I should like to comment on it here.

I do not believe, with Professor Brooks, that such reading *is* criticism, nor do I regard his reading of Tennyson's lyric as a criticism. Careful reading is a preliminary to criticism; no more. After understanding, the critic must appraise the work. If Professor Brooks's analysis is an ap-

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praisal, it is an assay merely of the technical operations of the poem. If his sole concern is to bring to light these effects in it, I assume that they alone are his criteria of the excellence of the lyric. If he were to read a poem which would baffle even his ingenuity in discovering irony, paradox, and dramatic evolution, would he deny it the name of poetry?

Also, in consequence of thus overprizing analytical reading, I think that Professor Brooks frequently overreaches himself by reading into poems ideas which exist only in his own preoccupations — especially at times when he is not mainly concerned to establish the innocuousness of his critical practice — e.g., in his finding that Wordsworth's sonnet, "Composed on Westminster Bridge," derives its power entirely from the poet's use of paradox.

Further, I do not believe that failure to comprehend the entire intelligible meaning of a poem is so necessarily preclusive of a reader's appreciation of it as Professor Brooks supposes; obviously the character of the poetry decides how disastrous such imperfect reading is. If a reader misses a part of John Donne's meaning, he is liable to miss all of it; but a hiatus of intelligibility in Whitman does not always preclude substantial appreciation. This fact is likely to be considered by the intellectual critics as proof that Whitman's looser structures are unpoetic — that is, outside of their definition of what is permissible in poetic expression.

Moreover, I believe that a deficiency of sensibility is a more serious bar to appreciation of poetry than is a deficiency of rational comprehension of the poem's meaning. For instance, I think that the child who only half understands the fairy tale read to him (comprehending it as Hawthorne said he comprehended his first reading, "rather by his sensibilities and affections than his intellect") appreciates it more justly than his more literal-minded and apathetic parent who with full rational comprehension reads it aloud. I think that a fourteen-year-old boy who chants to himself, with fascinated half-comprehension, the poems of Morris, or Beddoes, or Marvell, realizes more of their essential poetry than will ever be realized by a man like John Crowe Ransom, who has observed: "I came late into an interest in poetry, after I had been stuffed with the law if not the letter of our modern sciences, and quickly I had the difficulty of finding a poetry which would not deny what we in our strange generation actually are: men who have aged in these pure intellectual disciplines, and cannot play innocent without feeling very foolish." The man who comes thus into an "interest" in poetry, seeking to use

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it merely as an intellectual discipline, never finds out what poetry is, or what it is good for; the child who begins with a passion for something only partially explicable will advance to a fuller comprehension of it that will enhance his appreciation.

As for Professor Brooks's triumphant choice of Tennyson's lyric for analysis: He, in mistakenly supposing that I suppose intellectual critics will not undertake to say anything about such a poem (see "The Tense of Poetry" in Ransom's *The World's Body*), and in forthwith saying something about it, has much the air of a virtuoso making music on a handsaw: It is possible, after all, he says, to apply my method to other poets than the Metaphysicals. Possible — but how conclusive? Passing over the fact that Tennyson is no very striking example of the poet who keeps his technique subordinate to abundant poetic inspiration, I ask: Is the specifically valuable part of Tennyson only, or chiefly, that which Professor Brooks's interpretation emphasizes? Not for me at least, and I consider this sample of Professor Brooks's criticism to be only a further melancholy instance of his insistence that the technical half of poetry with which he is so obsessed is all there is of the art.

DARREL ABEL
Lafayette, Indiana

On the Summer Issue

To the Editor: Perhaps I should not "rush into script," but my scientific leanings impel. The Summer issue I found, in general, most interesting, enlightening, informative. I read it from terra-cotta to terra-cotta. Even "The New Criticism" I got some sense from. And Prof. Black, in his "Philosophy: A Hope for Higher Education," really put something over, though "philosophy" as it generally somehow manages to reach me is my bête noire.

But when I come to "Antagonists," I explode. Six times at least I've pored over that; I've taken it lightly, casually, too — but "drunk or sober, I find no faith in it"! Apparently, yes, it is war-inspired. To be as charitable as possible, I think this "most distinguished poet of her generation" is profoundly shell-shocked (though the medicos tell us there is no such entity). My confrere, graduate of a New York university, to whom I appealed for an opinion, said not to write you. What I needed for this verse was a key. Heaven save the mark! It's got to be better than a ΦBK key.

I recall in a mad-house I was once connected with (as laboratorian, to allay your suspicions) I once came upon a patient in dead of night in a corner of a lavatory, head down, muttering, "millions of millions, trillions of trillions . . ." and more of the same, and when I managed to get his attention a moment to see if there was anything I could do for him, he had a sudden lucid interval, and said perfectly sanely and pleadingly, "Please go away." Perhaps I should do as much for Miss Rukeyser! In the "Big Back Yard" of this institution, with its four high brick walls, etc., its hard, dry, bare ground, and few rough wooden benches, I used to pick out the most desolate looking case I could find in the aimlessly wandering conglomeration, barefoot, bareheaded, in colorless coveralls that covered nothing but his nakedness, and try to make an impression upon his dumbness. It is in some such spirit, I suppose, that I pick upon the author of these lines, where the only lucid interval I can see is the occasional rhyme at the end of a segment! And you, dear Editor, printed this sequence of words from Webster. How could any member of a chapel of the typothetae manage to get through the set-up!

Shall be looking for the Fall issue. Summer's goes now to our seminary library, where it attracts various of our theology students.

Good luck (and remember my ΦBK key is balanced by a Sigma Xi key! So you can make allowances).

BRO. LUKE DE LA MOTTE
Maryknoll, New York

On "Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet"

To the Editor: The article by Mr. Haggin and the comments thereon by teachers and professional musicians must have proved interesting to the lay music lovers who read THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. The writer of these lines was for many years a music critic in Chicago, but a critic who discussed concerts, opera and chamber music recitals from the viewpoint not of a musician but of an ardent lover of music in all its important forms. Technical language he avoided — the language that renders the program notes of the Boston or Philadelphia symphony orchestras almost meaningless to the majority of the auditors.

Mr. Haggin is unquestionably right in his main contention — to appreciate and enjoy music, you have to hear it many, many times. A Brahms symphony or a Mahler or Bruckner symphony is not enjoyed at the first or second hearing, but it is, emphatically, enjoyed at the

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fifth, sixth and subsequent performances. Again Mr. Haggin is right in asserting that much modern music cannot and will not give any pleasure to the lay public, however enlightened and cultivated. Music sans melody, depth, moving themes, charm and grace is a bore. On the other hand, it is not true that there is *no* profit for the lay music lover in any book on music, musical structure and form, musical evolution. Books like Grove's on the Beethoven symphonies, or Krehbiel's *How to Listen to Music*, or the late George Upton's readable and intelligible analyses of the major musical works, do enable the average concert-goer to derive pleasure and joy from great music *sooner* than otherwise. It is not idle or useless, either, to learn what the sonata form is, what the difference is between the classical and the "free" style, the adagio and the scherzo, the rondo and the theme-with-variations in a finale.

It is not irrelevant or vain to learn something from the right books about the historical schools of music, the temperaments, environments and musical ideas of the leading composers. These are in no sense substitutes for listening, but they are pleasant aids and they tend to enhance the interest of the musical public in the great works of the masters of all times.

A writer like Mr. Haggin might well prepare a short list of the books on music that merit attention and will repay perusal and re-perusal.

VICTOR S. YARROS
La Jolla, California

On "Will Babel Be Beaten?"

To the Editor: I have read with much interest the article "Will Babel Be Beaten?" The problem of the possibility of creating an instrument to make easier the intercommunication between human groups of different languages is a large one, and I believe that all efforts directed to solve it deserve special support. I have been following for some time the Basic English movement. In spite of its interest, and considering that it should be maintained (because at any rate it will be useful) I believe that its scope will always be limited. As to IALA, it would seem to be a happy idea. It has recourse to common philological and cultural sources, and without overcoming (which seems to me an impossibility) the disadvantages that all artificial languages have, its phonetics have a melodious value, and its construction leaves the door open to an unlimited wealth of all sorts of words which may refer to the same Greco-Latin origin.

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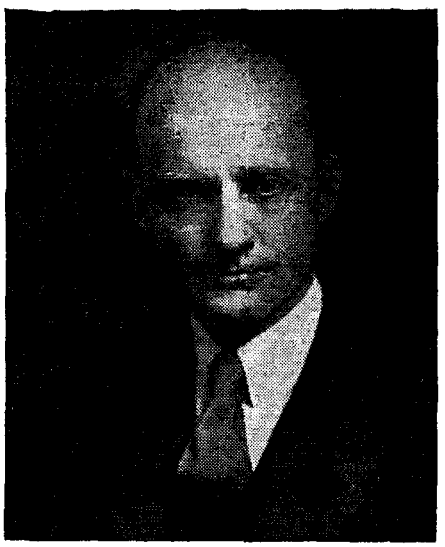

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to overcome some of the difficulties of communication between persons of different mother tongues. This would be to guarantee that all curricula, from grammar school to university, include everywhere the study of two or three living languages in addition to the mother tongue. Not the study of said languages for speaking purposes, which is most difficult, but to translate and understand with precision, which is much easier than to speak them. In this way, a conversation among various persons of different languages might be maintained without difficulty by each one employing his own language. With this, and an increase in the space given in school curricula to the study of Latin and Greek (or at least to the study of the Greek and Latin roots), great progress would be made on the way to "beat Babel."

MANUEL GOMEZ MORIN
Mexico, D.F.
Translated by Ramon Miranda

To the Editor: In reading through the Summer 1944, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, I was much distressed by the errors and distortions of fact contained in Mr. Edward Larocque Tinker's article, "Will Babel Be Beaten?" It seems worth while to call them to the attention of your other readers.

(1) The title of George Dalgarno's book (p. 322) is *Ars Signorum*, not *Ars Signoram*. (2) The bishop of Chester to whom Mr. Tinker refers (foot of p. 322) was not John Williams, but John Wilkins, and the title of his book is *An Essay Towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (not *Philosopher's Language*). (3) The inventor of Esperanto (p. 323) was L. L. Zamenhof (not L. Lamenhof). My recollection is that Zamenhof was a Pole, not a Russian. (4) On p. 324, near the top, Mr. Tinker makes the statement that certain languages, especially English, have "borrowed lavishly from Germanic and Slavic sources." This would seem to suggest that the Germanic element in English is the result of borrowing; an elementary book on the English language would have told him that the native element in English is Germanic, but that English has borrowed lavishly from the languages which he mentions in the same line with it. Also, I cannot understand why Mr. Tinker does not find any objection to the omission of German and Russian from a list of "the major national languages of Europe." (5) On p. 324 Mr. Tinker says that Basic English "threw its hat into the ring when Prime Minister Churchill advocated it. . . ." I fear that Basic English's hat was rather dilapidated when Mr. Churchill picked it up and put it on. I doubt very seriously whether the adoption of Basic English "would

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save England millions of dollars and thousands of man-hours on the translation of business letters" (p. 325); the difficulty of deciding what the poor foreigner meant to say would more than offset the saving which Mr. Tinker suggests. (6) On p. 327, Mr. Tinker says of his table that "these are facts, not propaganda"; but of the ten items in the table, four are either "estimated" or "averaged." And since the table is intended to show that "one out of every forty-eight inhabitants of the United States is speaking or studying Spanish," the utility of the last item ("North Americans who have learned Spanish") might be questioned; there is a subtle distinction between those who have had Spanish and those who have it. (7) On p. 322 Mr. Tinker says that people have invented "various *lingua franca*" — plural of *linguum francum?*

Since Mr. Tinker is a competent and respected scholar in other fields than linguistics, the inadequacies of his present article serve to point a moral. I do not know how the belief arose that almost anyone is qualified, without special training, to write on problems of language. A man who is untrained in chemistry or mathematics does not usually consider himself competent to write books and articles in those fields, but all of us, I judge, feel able and willing to discourse on linguistic matters. In this letter I am not so much condemning the printing of Mr. Tinker's article in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, as deploring the uncritical attitude which non-specialists take toward amateurs in the field of language and their works. An excellent beginning in a campaign of reform would be the inclusion of a professional student of linguistics in the list of Editorial Advisers,* on the verso of your title page.

ELLIOTT V. K. DOBBIE
Columbia University, New York, New York

** The Editor thought so highly of this suggestion that he asked Prof. Dobbie to represent the field of Linguistics on the Board of Editorial Advisers. We are happy to inform our readers that Prof. Dobbie has accepted.*

To the Editor: I have most certainly enjoyed reading Mr. Edward Larocque Tinker's article, entitled "Will Babel Be Beaten?" published in the Summer Issue 1944 of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR which you have been kind enough to send to me.

Mr. Tinker's observations are very interesting as are his fundamentals and conclusions. I must confess that through this article I have learned about IALA, the new universal language, and I also must admit that, although diminished, I find in IALA's essay the same errors and inconveniences chronologically detailed in Mr. Tinker's survey.

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I quote the words of Julio Camba, shrewd Spanish writer who said some time ago that ". . . every time man attempts to create a universal language, he succeeds in inventing a new one — as if there were not enough already."

Evidently, IALA's attempt has, as a favorable factor, its strong Latin influence, which would make it easily accessible to millions of Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and even Rumanian-speaking peoples. But, on the other hand, it would bring out the same difficulties created by Esperanto.

Basic English is, undoubtedly, a practical idea, although I believe that it may be used only as an "introduction" to the English language, but never as an attempted universal language. It would result in a "stuttering" language, and I am amused at the thought of what it would be like to have a speech delivered in Basic English to an English-speaking audience.

Furthermore, Basic English has two difficulties pointed out intelligently by Mr. Tinker: a ridiculous absence of adjectives, and the possibility of resistance to the language, if considered as a penetrating element with imperialistic tendency.

As far as the Spanish language is concerned, I can only say that it is an "architectural" language, e.g., formed in a rational pattern and with a solid foundation. It would be the ideal universal language if "the ideal world could begin."

At present, I believe that the only and real solution for the linguisitic problem in the world, rests on the compulsory teaching in schools and universities, of two additional languages besides the native tongue: to teach English and French in the Spanish-speaking countries; Spanish and French in the English-speaking countries; in Slavic countries to choose two of the three languages, and so on.

This method would eliminate the natural resistance that one language only would offer, as an element of "penetration," and it would open directly to men the extensive horizons of those three cultures, which would be an inexhaustible source of beauty and knowledge.

The French language is obligatory in the high schools of Uruguay, English being optional. Thus, the step to take is not a big one, since it would only make one of the languages compulsory in grammar school, and the other one in high school.

According to Mr. Tinker's research, there are already 2,500,000 volunteer students of the Spanish language in U.S.A. During this war, thousands of Frenchmen have lived in England and the United States, and many other thousands are going to welcome, with open arms, the gallant British-American soldiers in their victorious march

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through the continent. The moment is favorable, and results should be obtained in a few years.

ROBERTO FONTAINA
Information Bureau of Uruguay, New York, N. Y.

To the Editor: Mr. Edward Larocque Tinker's article "Will Babel Be Beaten?" (which incidentally was cruelly beaten at the hands of proofreaders and copy editors, what with Zamenhof disguised as "Lamenhof," "*ars signoram*," and "various *lingua franca*") provides an opportunity for a re-appraisal of the various proposed media of international communication. The following is not by way of disparaging Mr. Tinker, who in his paper acted as an impartial reporter, but of examining the same subject matter in a more critical vein.

I will not take up the familiar complaint that all artificial languages are dryly factual and bare of overtones. The Gettysburg address in IALA is indeed painful. But then the artificial languages are intended for technical and business purposes rather than for literature. A valid critique must lean on linguistic considerations more than on aesthetic ones.

The Indo-European languages are characterized by varying amounts of inflexion, strictly classifiable parts of speech and a peculiar structure of clauses. In this fundamental respect all Indo-European languages are cousins. But between them and the other language groups of the world there is no family resemblance. The European student of Chinese faces the difficulty of having to discard his notions of subject and object, tense and case, word order and sentence structure, just as the Chinese student of English or Russian must go to the trouble of acquiring them. The proposed international languages are unreconstructed though uninflected and somewhat streamlined Indo-European, and I doubt that they have materially lessened that difficulty. Indeed, I do not believe that it can be lessened. A vocabulary can be derived from a variety of sources, as in the case of Esperanto or English, but I doubt the possibility of a syntax embodying the most convenient features of each of the world's language groups.

If I seem to exaggerate the difficulty of revising in one's mind the elementary structural concepts of language, let me recommend Theodor Kalepky's *Neuaufbau der Grammatik*, in which a reconstructed grammar for our own European family of languages is set forth. The reader will find that the study of non-Euclidean syntax is anything but an after-dinner game.

The existing inter-languages, then, are easiest to learn for users of European languages, who,

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linguistically speaking, need them least. People of other nations are apt to find them only a slight improvement over the natural languages of Europe. (And if they are to be spoken as well as written, who knows but that in a few generations the flux of language will have created Scotch and Spanish versions, Bantu and Brooklyn dialects of IALA.)

Basic English, unlike the artificial languages, restricts itself to simplifying the vocabulary of a language which is fitted like none other for international use. English is Indo-European, yet it has some characteristics in common with the isolating languages, to which Chinese belongs. Its comparative lack of inflexion has endeared it to Europeans and non-Europeans alike. Its brevity, logic and wealth are set off only by an antiquated system of spelling. Basic, unfortunately, proposes to replace wealth by poverty, not merely as a first step in learning English, but as a permanent system of international communication.

I think native speakers of English will find it nearly as trying to operate under the restrictions of Basic as to learn a foreign language. And is there really any need for such restrictions? It was said above that the major difficulty in mastering a language is to grasp its structure. Once that is understood, a few hundred additions to the vocabulary are a small matter. Any correspondent, writer or journalist working for a foreign audience will endeavor to keep his language clear and simple, but does he need an index of sheep and goats, of permissible and forbidden words to do so? On a matter-of-fact level any telegraph code will suffice as well. On any other, Basic has little to offer. It seems unlikely that anyone could be stirred by the Theory That All Men Are to Their Maker Equal.

The answer is still to be found in natural language, not in the mechanical constructs of clever amateurs. Mr. Tinker thinks it *may be* Spanish. I suspect that it *is* English.

GEORGE SALOMON
New York, New York

To the Editor: Mr. Edward Larocque Tinker, in his article, "Will Babel Be Beaten?" in the summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, too readily dismisses Esperanto from consideration as the best auxiliary tongue yet devised. His familiarity with Esperanto, one gathers, is as superficial as his knowledge of the history and modern development of the language. The originator of Esperanto, it should be pointed out, was Dr. L. L. Zamenhof, and not, as rendered twice in the article, Lamenhof. The editors of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR should be reprimanded for nodding.

Until the spread of Nazism, Esperanto numbered more than a million adherents in every corner of the globe. Close to 5,000 books have been published in this tongue. Before the Hitler terror and the emergence of intense nationalism everywhere, some 100 magazines were published regularly. A number of American high schools offered popular elective courses in Esperanto.

This auxiliary tongue, then, already has an authentic tradition, a living literature of its own, a powerful following. It is extremely easy to learn, flexible in form and precise in expression.

With the need for universal adoption of such a tongue, as enunciated by Mr. Tinker, I am in hearty accord, and though he does not see his way clear to accepting Esperanto, I am glad to welcome him as a *samideano*, an Esperanto word with no adequate English equivalent — a like-minded person.

PVT. CARL ALPERT
Camp Blanding, Florida

"Will Babel Be Beaten?" was reprinted in translation in El Nacionale, Mexico City newspaper, on August 5, 1944.

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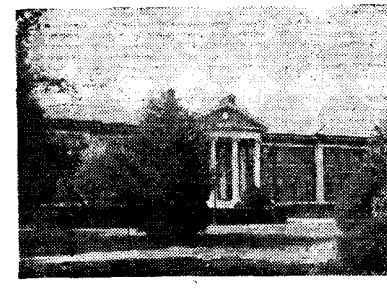

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Index to Volume 13

Names of authors in *italics;* main articles in **bold face.**

The pagination of the volume is divided as follows: Winter, 1–128; Spring, 129–256; Summer, 257–384; Autumn, 385–512

Indexed in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*

A.B.'s Must Eat, Even, *Ernest Earnest*, 403
Abel, Darrel, 500
Adelmann, Howard B., 14
Alpert, Carl, 508
Alumni, The, *A Poem, Theodore Spencer*, 26
American Education, Literature in, *Marjorie H. Nicolson*, 122
American Essay, A Word for the, *John T. Flanagan*, 459
American Readers and Books, *Dorothy Canfield Fisher*, 179
Americans Read Comics, Why 100,000,000, *William Moulton Marston*, 35, 247, 248
Americas, The Humanities in the, *John Erskine*, 58, 247
"Anglo-American Future," On the, *F. R. Flournoy*, 252
Antagonists, The, *A Poem, Muriel Rukeyser*, 296
Anthropological Study, Finnegans Wake: An, *Richard V. Chase*, 418
Arts, New Dimensions and the, *William Sener Rusk*, 193
Arts?, Which Are the Liberating, *John Herman Randall, Jr.*, 135, 380
Babel Be Beaten?, Will, *Edward Larocque Tinker*, 322, 503, 504, 505, 507, 508
Bauer, Catherine, 70
Beard of Joseph Palmer, The, *Stewart Holbrook*, 451
Benedictory, *A Poem, Elizabeth Phillips*, 468
Bennett, J. A. W., 367
Black, Max, 300
Books, American Readers and, *Dorothy Canfield Fisher*, 179
Brandow, Walter M., 247
Brooks, Cleanth, 248, 285
Buchanan, Scott, 396
Cameron, Meribeth E., 340
Can the Social Sciences Be Useful?, *William Foote Whyte*, 346
Cassirer, Ernst, 407
Chase, Richard V., 418
Chicago, Lexicography at, *M. M. Mathews*, 369
Cities in Flux, *Catherine Bauer*, 70
Colonies, The Future of, *Walter Sulzbach*, 45
Comics, Why 100,000,000 Americans Read, *William Moulton Marston*, 35, 247, 248
Conrad, An Interview with Joseph, *Bronislas A. Jezierski*, 371
Cooperative Research, *Caryl P. Haskins*, 210
Count Rumford, "The International Egotist," *Frederic H. Young*, 479
Cromwell, Otelia, 149
Cultural Reparations and a New Western Tradition, *Douglas Rigby*, 273
Dauntless the Slug-Horn, *A Poem, Robert Hume*, 449
de la Motte, Luke, 502
Democracy and the Negro, *Otelia Cromwell*, 149, 380, 495, 496, 498
Democratic Society, The Function of the Liberal Arts College in a, *Scott Buchanan, John Dewey, Ernest Earnest, Alexander Meiklejohn, Arnold S. Nash, Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 391
Dewey, John, 391
Discharge, Honorable, *John A. P. Millet*, 429
Dobbie, Elliott V. K., 504
Do Not Dismember Europe!, *Albert Guérard*, 85
Downes, Olin, 126
Dublin, Louis I., 95
Earnest, Ernest, 403
Earth, Weighing the, *Paul R. Heyl*, 234
Eason, Sarah Martin, 380
Editorials: *Irwin Edman*, 5, *Christian Gauss*, 133, *Burton E. Livingston*, 261, *William A. Neilson*, 389
Edman, Irwin, 5
Education and Politics, Liberal, *Scott Buchanan*, 396
Education for Freedom, Required, *Alexander Meiklejohn*, 393
Education, Literature in American, *Marjorie H. Nicolson*, 122
Education, Philosophy: A Hope for Higher, *Max Black*, 300
Education, Of the Librarian's, *W. Stanley Hoole*, 110, 252
Education, The Liberal Arts College and Professional, *Arnold S. Nash*, 398
Enemy, Our Unknown, *D.H.M.*, 241
Erskine, John, 58
Essay, A Word for the American, *John T. Flanagan*, 459
Europe!, Do Not Dismember, *Albert Guérard*, 85
Even A.B.'s Must Eat, *Ernest Earnest*, 403
Faith of the Scholar, The, *Norman Foerster*, 224
Federation or Cooperation: The Scandinavian Experience, *C. J. Hambro*, 171
Fence, The, *Howard B. Adelmann*, 14
Field, Harold C., 247
Finnegans Wake: An Anthropological Study, *Richard V. Chase*, 418
Fire, The Peshtigo, *Stewart Holbrook*, 201
Fisher, Dorothy Canfield, 179
Flanagan, John T., 459
Flournoy, F. R., 252
Foerster, Norman, 224
Fontaina, Roberto, 505
Force and Freedom, *Ernst Cassirer*, 407
Forum, The American Scholar: The Function of the Liberal Arts College in a Democratic Society, *Scott Buchanan, John Dewey, Ernest Earnest, Alexander Meiklejohn, Arnold S. Nash, Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 391
Freedom, Force and, *Ernst Cassirer*, 407
Freedom, Required Education for, *Alexander Meiklejohn*, 393
Function of the Liberal Arts College in a Democratic Society, The, *Scott Buchanan, John Dewey, Ernest Earnest, Alexander Meiklejohn, Arnold S. Nash, Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 391
Generals in Politics, *Frank Weitenkampf*, 375
Germany Can Be Re-educated, *Joseph Katz*, 309
Gibson, Will, 192
Glass, Jeremiah, 380
Gordis, Robert, 437
Gordon, Don, 428
Guérard, Albert, 85
Haggin, B. H., 162
Hambro, C. J., 171
Hamlet, Music for the Man Who Enjoys, *B. H. Haggin*, 162, 378, 379, 502
Haskins, Caryl P., 210

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Heilman, Robert B., 248
Heyl, Paul R., 234
Holbrook, Stewart, 201, 451
Holmes Still the Poet Laureate at Eighty-Four, Oliver Wendell, *Miriam Rossiter Small*, 244
Honorable Discharge, *John A. P. Millet*, 429
Hoole, W. Stanley, 110
Humanities in the Americas, The, *John Erskine*, 58, 247
Hume, Robert A., 449
Interview with Joseph Conrad, An, *Bronislas A. Jezierski*, 371
Itself Unmoving, *A Poem, Nancy Kirby*, 488
Jews — A Problem That Cannot Wait, The, *Robert Gordis*, 437
Jezierski, Bronislas A., 371
Johnson, Gerald W., 490
Johnson and His Friends, On the Talk of Samuel, *Joseph Wood Krutch*, 263
Katz, Joseph, 309
Kirby, Nancy, 488
Koch: A Centenary, Robert, *Louis I. Dublin*, 95
Koontz, Amos R., 496
Krutch, Joseph Wood, 263
Lexicography at Chicago, *M. M. Mathews*, 369
Liberal Arts and Sciences, The Useful and, *Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 401
Liberal Arts College and Professional Education, The, *Arnold S. Nash*, 398
Liberal Arts College in a Democratic Society, The Function of the, *Scott Buchanan, John Dewey, Ernest Earnest, Alexander Meiklejohn, Arnold S. Nash, Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 391
Liberal Arts College, The Problem of the, *John Dewey*, 391
Liberal Education and Politics, *Scott Buchanan*, 396
Librarian's Education, Of the, *W. Stanley Hoole*, 110, 252
Liebling, Leonard, 126
Literature in American Education, *Marjorie H. Nicolson*, 122
Livingston, Burton E., 261
M., D. H., 241
Man at Work, *A Poem, Oscar Williams*, 467
Marston, William Moulton, 35
Mathews, M. M., 369
Medieval Poet, To a, *A Poem, George F. Whicher*, 427
Meiklejohn, Alexander, 393
Millet, John A. P., 429
Morin, Manuel Gomez, 503
Mossman, Mereb E., 498
"Most Happifying Purposes," *Gerald W. Johnson*, 490
Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet, *B. H. Haggin*, 162, 378, 379, 502
Nash, Arnold S., 398
North American Prairie, *J. E. Weaver*, 329
Negro, Democracy and the, *Otelia Cromwell*, 149, 380, 495, 496, 498
Neilson, William A., 389
New Criticism: A Brief for the Defense, The, *Cleanth Brooks*, 285, 500
New Departures and Old Problems, *William A. Neilson*, 389
New Dimensions and the Arts, *William Sener Rusk*, 193
Nicolson, Marjorie H., 122
Occupied Country, *A Poem, Don Gordon*, 428
Of the Librarian's Education, *W. Stanley Hoole*, 110, 252
Oliver Wendell Holmes Still the Poet Laureate at Eighty-Four, *Miriam Rossiter Small*, 244
On the Couch, *A Poem, Oscar Williams*, 345
On the Road to Truth, *Robert Withington*, 356
On the Talk of Samuel Johnson and His Friends, *Joseph Wood Krutch*, 263
Orient Does Not Exist, The, *Meribeth E. Cameron*, 340
Our Authors, 127, 253, 382
Our Unknown Enemy, *D. H. M.*, 241
Oxford Revisited, *J. A. W. Bennett*, 367
Pacifism, The Future of, *Bertrand Russell*, 7
Palmer, The Beard of Joseph, *Stewart Holbrook*, 451
Penicillin, *Jane Stafford*, 469
Peshtigo Fire, The, *Stewart Holbrook*, 201
Pfaff, Eugene E., 495
Phillips, Elizabeth, 468
Philosophy: A Hope for Higher Education, *Max Black*, 300
"Plight of the American Composer," On the, *Olin Downes, Leonard Liebling*, 126
Politics, Generals in, *Frank Weitenkampf*, 375
Politics, Liberal Education and, *Scott Buchanan*, 396
Prairie, North American, *J. E. Weaver*, 329
Problem of the Liberal Arts College, The, *John Dewey*, 391
Professional Education, The Liberal Arts College and, *Arnold S. Nash*, 398
Randall, John Herman, Jr., 135
Reparations and a New Western Tradition, Cultural, *Douglas Rigby*, 273
Required Education for Freedom, *Alexander Meiklejohn*, 393
Research, Cooperative, *Caryl P. Haskins*, 210
Revolving Bookstand, The: "Most Happifying Purposes," *Gerald W. Johnson*, 490
Rigby, Douglas, 273
Robert Koch: A Centenary, *Louis I. Dublin*, 95
Rukeyser, Muriel, 296
Rumford, "The International Egotist," Count, *Frederic H. Young*, 479
Rusk, William Sener, 193
Russell, Bertrand, 7
Salomon, George, 507
Scandinavian Experience, Federation or Cooperation: The, *C. J. Hambro*, 171
Scholar, The Faith of the, *Norman Foerster*, 224
Sciences, The Useful and Liberal Arts and, *Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 401
Shepherd, Arthur, 379
Sills, Kenneth C. M., 401
Small, Miriam Rossiter, 244
Social Sciences Be Useful?, Can the, William Foote Whyte, 346
Spencer, Theodore, 26
Stafford, Jane, 469
Sulzbach, Walter, 45
Three Poems, *Will Gibson*, 192
Tinker, Edward Larocque, 322
To a Medieval Poet, *A Poem, George F. Whicher*, 427
Truth, On the Road to, *Robert Withington*, 356
Useful and Liberal Arts and Sciences, The, *Kenneth C. M. Sills*, 401
Weaver, J. E., 329
Weighing the Earth, *Paul R. Heyl*, 234
Weitenkampf, Frank, 375
Wheeler, Joseph L., 252
Which Are the Liberating Arts?, *John Herman Randall, Jr.*, 135, 380
Whicher, George F., 427
Why 100,000,000 Americans Read Comics, *William Moulton Marston*, 35, 247, 248
Whyte, William Foote, 346
Will Babel Be Beaten?, *Edward Larocque Tinker*, 322, 503, 504, 505, 507, 508
Williams, Oscar, 345, 467
Withington, Robert, 356
Word for the American Essay, A, *John T. Flanagan*, 459
Yarros, Victor S., 502
Young, Frederic H., 479

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